
WORD STUDY SERIES

A
Study of
TITUS

Sound Doctrine • Godly Living • Gospel Grace

TITUS 3:5

*"He saved us, not by the righteous deeds we had done,
but according to His mercy."*

A STUDY OF
TITUS

Sound Doctrine · Godly Living · Gospel Grace

"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."

— Titus 2:11–12

Berean Study Bible Text
Greek Word Studies · Verse-by-Verse Commentary · Study Questions · Personal Notes

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Dedicated to
my children,
as you grow and walk in your faith.

*“Train up a child in the way he should go;
even when he is old he will not depart from it.”*

— Proverbs 22:6

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How to Use This Study Book

This book is designed to help you go deeper into Paul's letter to Titus — one of the three Pastoral Epistles — through verse-by-verse commentary, Greek word study, guided questions, and space for your own reflections.

Each section includes:

- The Scripture text (Berean Study Bible) in a shaded reading box
- A short verse-by-verse commentary explaining the context and meaning
- A Greek word study table — every key term with its Greek form, transliteration, and definition
- Study questions to prompt personal reflection and group discussion
- Lined notes pages to record your own thoughts, prayers, and insights

Tips for studying:

- Read the passage aloud before diving into commentary — let the words land first
- Look up cross-references mentioned in the commentary to see how Paul's themes echo across Scripture
- Use the Greek word table to slow down on key terms — original language precision often unlocks meaning
- Write in the notes sections! Your personal engagement with the text is part of study
- Discuss the study questions with others — Titus was written to a community, not just an individual

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Introduction to Titus

About the Letter

The opening greeting (1:1–4) is longer than Paul's usual greeting and contains a reminder that God has promised eternal life and brought it to pass in due course. Paul has left Titus in Crete to set things in order in the church, and he now urges him to appoint elders in every town, giving directions about the kind of person required for this office (1:5–9). There is a contrast with the "many rebellious people" to be found in Crete; Paul warns Titus against them (1:10–16). He goes on to detail what must be taught to older men (2:2), older women who will teach younger women (2:3–5), younger men (2:6–8), and slaves (2:9–10). All believers are to live uprightly, awaiting "the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ" (2:11–15). People in authority are to be obeyed (3:1–2). There is a contrast between the way people lived before they became Christians and the good lives that follow Christ's saving work in them (3:3–8). They should avoid foolish divisions (3:9–11). The letter is rounded off with some instructions about various individuals and then closing greetings (3:12–15).

Key Themes in Titus

- Sound doctrine and its connection to godly living — what we believe shapes how we behave
- Leadership qualifications — character matters more than gifting for those who lead the church
- The grace of God as the power behind both salvation and sanctification
- Good works — not as the basis of salvation, but as its natural, visible fruit
- The blessed hope — Christ's return as the motivation for present faithfulness

— Adapted from Carson & Moo, *An Introduction to the New Testament* (Zondervan, 2005), pp. 581–584

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Chapter 1 • Elders, False Teachers, and the Standard of Truth

Titus 1:1–4 — Paul's Greeting

Paul, a servant of God and an apostle of Jesus Christ for the faith of God's elect and their knowledge of the truth that leads to godliness, in the hope of eternal life, which God, who cannot lie, promised before time began. In His own time He has made His word evident in the proclamation entrusted to me by the command of God our Savior. To Titus, my true child in our common faith: Grace and peace from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Savior.

COMMENTARY

Paul opens with his credentials: a servant (slave) of God and an apostle of Christ Jesus. This greeting is longer than his usual openings because the letter is foundational — it establishes the basis for everything Titus is tasked to do. Paul's purpose is rooted in the faith of God's elect and in truth that produces godliness — the connection between right belief and right living is the thread that runs through the whole letter.

Verse 2 grounds everything in God's eternal promise of life — made 'before time began,' which excludes any human contribution. The God who cannot lie has already guaranteed the outcome. Paul's proclamation in verse 3 is the entrusted, commanded declaration of that eternal promise, breaking into time at exactly the right moment.

Titus is addressed as a 'true child' in their shared faith — Paul's affection for him is genuine. The closing grace and peace anticipates the letter's final word (3:15), bookending the entire letter with divine favor.

GREEK WORD STUDY

English Word	Greek (Transliteration)	Definition
Servant	δοῦλος (<i>doulos</i>)	Slave — a person legally owned by another, whose entire livelihood and purpose was determined by their master. Paul wears this title with honor.
Apostle	ἀπόστολος (<i>apostolos</i>)	Envoy; one commissioned directly by Jesus Christ, invested with authority to speak on His behalf.
Elect	ἐκλεκτός (<i>eklektos</i>)	Chosen; selected in preference to another. God's people, chosen by His sovereign grace.
Truth	ἀλήθεια (<i>aletheia</i>)	Truth — a true statement that is dependable and reliable. Not merely factual data but life-orienting reality.

Godliness	<i>εὐσέβεια (eusebeia)</i>	Piety; godliness — the devout practice of, and appropriate beliefs about, God. The goal of truth.
Hope	<i>ἐλπίς (elpis)</i>	Hope; expectation — not mere wishful thinking, but confident expectation centered on God's promise.
Promised	<i>ἐπαγγέλλομαι (epangellomai)</i>	To make a verbal commitment to another to do something in the future. God's promise is His binding word.
Word	<i>λόγος (logos)</i>	Word; message — the content of communications representative of God and His mind; the Gospel.
Proclamation	<i>κήρυγμα (kerygma)</i>	A public proclamation by a herald; especially God's message of salvation entrusted to Paul.

STUDY QUESTIONS

Study Questions

1. Paul calls himself both a 'servant of God' and an 'apostle of Jesus Christ.' What does it mean that authority and servanthood go together in Paul's understanding of ministry?
2. Paul says truth 'leads to godliness' (v.1). In your own life, how has understanding truth changed the way you live? Where do you see that connection working or breaking down?
3. God promised eternal life 'before time began' (v.2). What difference does it make that salvation was planned before creation — not as a response to us but as a purpose from God?
4. Titus is called Paul's 'true child in our common faith.' What relationships in your own life have formed you spiritually the way Paul formed Titus?

NOTES ON TITUS 1:1–4

NOTES ON TITUS 1:1-4 (CONTINUED)

Titus 1:5–9 — Qualifications for Elders

The reason I left you in Crete was that you would set in order what was unfinished and appoint elders in every town, as I directed you. An elder must be blameless, the husband of but one wife, having children who are believers and who are not open to accusation of indiscretion or insubordination. As God's steward, an overseer must be above reproach — not self-absorbed, not quick-tempered, not given to drunkenness, not violent, not greedy for money. Instead, he must be hospitable, a lover of good, self-controlled, upright, holy, and disciplined. He must hold firmly to the faithful word as it was taught, so that he can encourage others by sound teaching and refute those who contradict it.

COMMENTARY

Paul's first task for Titus is structural: appoint elders in every town. The church needs healthy local leadership, and Paul provides a detailed portrait of what that looks like. Notably, Paul uses 'elder' (presbyteros) and 'overseer' (episkopos) interchangeably — these are not two different offices but two descriptions of the same role.

The qualifications are almost entirely about character, not competence. The only ministry skill listed is in verse 9 — holding to sound doctrine so as to teach and refute. Everything else is about what kind of person the elder is: at home, with family, in self-governance. The church is not a corporation where outcomes override character.

Verse 7 lists five negatives — what the overseer must not be — and verse 8 lists six positives. The pivot from negative to positive is instructive: Christian leadership is not just the absence of vice but the presence of virtue. The elder is a steward (oikonomos) — a household manager — which means the church is God's household, and the elder serves at God's direction, not their own.

GREEK WORD STUDY

English Word	Greek (Transliteration)	Definition
Elders	πρεσβύτερος (presbyteros)	Elder; older man — a leader appointed over an assembly of Christian believers.
Blameless	ἀνέγκλητος (anenkletos)	Above reproach; not subject to accusation — a person against whom no valid charge can be brought.
Steward	οἰκονόμος (oikonomos)	Manager of a household; one who supervises on behalf of the owner. The elder manages God's house, not his own.
Overseer	ἐπίσκοπος (episkopos)	Overseer; bishop — a leader who watches, directs, cares for, and is accountable for an assembly of believers.

Self-absorbed	αὐθάδης (<i>authades</i>)	Self-willed; stubborn; arrogant — caring only for one's own pleasure regardless of others.
Quick-tempered	ὀργίλος (<i>orgilos</i>)	Prone to anger; easily aroused to wrath. Leadership and hair-trigger anger cannot coexist.
Hospitable	φιλόξενος (<i>philoxenos</i>)	Lover of strangers; hospitable — disposed to treat guests and strangers with generous cordiality.
Disciplined	ἐγκρατής (<i>enkrates</i>)	Self-controlled; having mastery over oneself — especially over sensual desires. Resolute self-governance.
Faithful	πιστός (<i>pistos</i>)	Faithful; reliable; trustworthy — certain and dependable. The word the elder holds must be just as reliable.
Teaching	διδασκαλία (<i>didaskalia</i>)	Instruction; teaching — the content of what is taught, not just the act of teaching.

STUDY QUESTIONS

Study Questions

- Paul's elder qualifications focus heavily on character and family life rather than spiritual gifting or ministry success. What does this tell us about how God defines fitness for leadership?
- Look at the five 'not' qualities in verse 7 and the six positive qualities in verse 8. Which of these do you most need to grow in personally, regardless of whether you hold a formal leadership role?
- The elder must hold 'firmly to the faithful word... so that he can encourage and refute' (v.9). Why is it impossible to do both — encourage believers and refute false teaching — without a firm grip on doctrine?
- Paul calls the elder 'God's steward.' How does viewing your own role (at work, at home, in ministry) as stewardship — managing what belongs to God — change how you approach it?

NOTES ON TITUS 1:5–9

NOTES ON TITUS 1:5–9 (CONTINUED)

Titus 1:10–16 — False Teachers and the Need for Rebuke

For many are rebellious and full of empty talk and deception, especially those of the circumcision, who must be silenced. For the sake of dishonorable gain, they undermine entire households and teach things they should not. As one of their own prophets has said, 'Cretans are always liars, evil beasts, lazy gluttons.' This testimony is true. Therefore rebuke them sternly, so that they will be sound in the faith and will pay no attention to Jewish myths or to the commands of men who have rejected the truth. To the pure, all things are pure; but to the defiled and unbelieving, nothing is pure. Indeed, both their minds and their consciences are defiled. They profess to know God, but by their actions they deny Him. They are detestable, disobedient, and unfit for any good deed.

COMMENTARY

Having described the kind of leader the church needs, Paul immediately explains why: because the alternative is not a vacuum but false teachers. The 'circumcision group' were Judaizing Christians — those who insisted that full obedience to Mosaic law, including circumcision, was required alongside faith in Christ. Paul saw this as a direct assault on the gospel of grace.

Paul quotes the Cretan poet Epimenides (c. 600 BC) — 'Cretans are always liars...' — not to be ethnically dismissive, but to acknowledge the cultural reality Titus was working in. The point is pastoral: the environment is difficult, so the standards must be high and the correction must be firm.

The core problem is summarized in verse 16: they profess to know God, but their actions deny Him. This is Paul's constant concern throughout Titus — the connection between what you believe and how you live. Defiled minds and consciences (v.15) cannot produce pure living. Truth and godliness are inseparable.

GREEK WORD STUDY

English Word	Greek (Transliteration)	Definition
Rebellious	ἀνυπότακτος (<i>anypotaktos</i>)	Insubordinate; refusing to be placed under authority. The opposite of the submission Paul calls believers to.
Empty Talk	ματαιολόγος (<i>mataiologos</i>)	One who talks idly — drivel that is worthless and leads nowhere. Noise without substance.
Deception	φρεναπάτης (<i>phrenapates</i>)	Deceiver; misleader — one who leads you to believe something that is not true.
Silenced	ἐπιστομίζω (<i>epistomizo</i>)	To silence — conceived of as obstructing someone's mouth to prevent harmful speech.

Undermine	<i>ἀνατρέπω (anatrepo)</i>	To overturn; ruin — to destroy from the ground up, like capsizing a vessel.
Rebuke	<i>ἐλέγχω (elencho)</i>	To expose; reprove; convict — to admonish strongly with argumentation that refutes and convinces.
Sternly	<i>ἀποτόμως (apotomos)</i>	Severely; rigorously — in an unpleasantly sharp manner. Firm love sometimes requires a hard word.
Pure	<i>καθαρός (katharos)</i>	Clean; spotless; free from guilt. Purity here is spiritual and moral, not ritual.
Conscience	<i>συνείδησις (syneidesis)</i>	Conscience — the faculty that distinguishes right from wrong; it either affirms or afflicts the person.
Myths	<i>μῦθος (mythos)</i>	Myth; fictional story — ahistorical narratives used to construct false religious frameworks.

STUDY QUESTIONS

Study Questions

9. Paul says the false teachers 'profess to know God but by their actions deny Him' (v.16). What actions in a person's life would you say 'deny' God, even if they claim belief?
10. Paul tells Titus to 'rebuke them sternly' (v.13). Why is stern rebuke sometimes an act of love? When does gentleness become enabling instead of caring?
11. The Judaizers were motivated by 'dishonorable gain' (v.11). What are some modern motivations that lead people to distort the gospel today?
12. Verse 15 says that to the defiled, 'nothing is pure.' How does a person's internal spiritual state shape the way they see and interpret the world around them?

NOTES ON TITUS 1:10–16

Chapter Review Questions

Use these questions to review the big picture of Chapter 1 before moving into Chapter 2.

- 13.** What is the relationship between appointing good elders and protecting the church from false teachers? How does good leadership prevent false teaching from gaining a foothold?
- 14.** Paul paints two portraits in chapter 1: the faithful elder (1:5–9) and the false teacher (1:10–16). List three contrasts between them. What does this tell you about the kind of community God intends the church to be?
- 15.** The gospel of grace was being compromised by the addition of law-keeping. What things today do people add to grace as conditions of acceptance with God?
- 16.** What one thing from Chapter 1 do you most want to apply to your own life this week?

CHAPTER 1 — PERSONAL REFLECTIONS

CHAPTER 1 — PERSONAL REFLECTIONS (CONTINUED)

Chapter 2 • Sound Doctrine for Every Generation

Titus 2:1–10 — Instructions for All Groups in the Church

But as for you, speak the things that are consistent with sound doctrine. Older men are to be temperate, dignified, self-controlled, and sound in faith, love, and perseverance. Older women, likewise, are to be reverent in their behavior, not slanderers or addicted to much wine, but teachers of good. In this way they can train the young women to love their husbands and children, to be self-controlled, pure, managers of their households, kind, and submissive to their own husbands, so that the word of God will not be discredited. In the same way, urge the younger men to be self-controlled. In everything, show yourself to be an example by doing good works. In your teaching show integrity, dignity, and wholesome speech that is above reproach, so that anyone who opposes us will be ashamed to have nothing bad to say about us. Slaves are to submit to their own masters in everything, to be well-pleasing, not argumentative, not stealing from them, but showing all good faith, so that in every respect they will adorn the teaching about God our Savior.

COMMENTARY

Chapter 2 opens with a pivot: 'But as for you...' — a deliberate contrast with the false teachers of chapter 1. Where they spread confusion, Titus is to speak what is consistent with sound doctrine. Paul then gives Titus concrete, group-specific instructions for every category of person in the church.

Older men are to embody mature faith — temperate, dignified, self-controlled. Older women are to be reverent and sober, which then equips them to mentor younger women. The pattern is intentional: older generations are supposed to model and train younger ones. This is how the gospel reproduces itself in a community.

Younger men receive the briefest charge: 'be self-controlled.' Paul then tells Titus to demonstrate this by example first. You cannot lead people somewhere you haven't gone. The slaves section is theologically important — even in oppressive circumstances, their faithful, honest, submissive behavior 'adorns' the gospel. Their life becomes a living commendation of the teaching about God.

GREEK WORD STUDY

English Word	Greek (Transliteration)	Definition
Sound (Doctrine)	ὑγιαίνω (<i>hygiaino</i>)	To be healthy; free from infirmity. Sound doctrine is healthy doctrine — it produces life, not disease.

Temperate	νηφάλιος (<i>nephalios</i>)	Sober; self-controlled — free from the fog of excess. Clarity of mind and moderation in life.
Dignified	σεμνός (<i>semnos</i>)	Worthy of respect; showing reverence — a gravity and seriousness that commands honor.
Slanderers	διάβολος (<i>diabolos</i>)	Devil; accuser — one who attacks others' reputations through false or malicious speech.
Train	σωφρονίζω (<i>sophronizo</i>)	To instruct in wise self-control; to recall someone to their senses. The older women's teaching role is formative, not informational.
Example	τύπος (<i>typos</i>)	Type; pattern; mold — something that shapes what is pressed against it. Titus is to be a living mold for younger men.
Integrity	ἀφθορία (<i>aphthoria</i>)	Soundness; incorruption — teaching free from error, distortion, or hidden agenda.
Adorn	κοσμέω (<i>kosmeo</i>)	To decorate; make beautiful. The slaves' faithful conduct makes the gospel attractive to watching outsiders.
Well-pleasing	εὐάρεστος (<i>euarestos</i>)	Pleasing; acceptable — to give full satisfaction, perhaps beyond what is expected.

STUDY QUESTIONS

Study Questions

17. Paul addresses older men, older women, younger women, younger men, and slaves as distinct groups with different instructions. What does this tell us about how the gospel applies to every stage and circumstance of life?
18. Older women are to 'train' younger women (v.4). What formal or informal mentoring relationships exist (or should exist) in your church community? Who is investing in whom?
19. Titus is told to be an 'example' (v.7) before he teaches younger men. Where in your life are you leading by example — and where might your words be outpacing your life?
20. The slaves' faithful conduct is said to 'adorn the teaching about God our Savior' (v.10). How does your ordinary daily behavior — at work, at home — either attract or detract attention from the gospel?

NOTES ON TITUS 2:1–10

NOTES ON TITUS 2:1–10 (CONTINUED)

Titus 2:11–15 — The Grace That Trains

For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to everyone. It instructs us to renounce ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live sensible, upright, and godly lives in the present age, as we await the blessed hope and glorious appearance of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ. He gave Himself for us to redeem us from all lawlessness and to purify for Himself a people for His own possession, zealous for good deeds. Speak these things as you encourage and rebuke with all authority. Let no one despise you.

COMMENTARY

This is the theological heartbeat of chapter 2 — and arguably of the whole letter. Paul grounds every ethical command in the appearing of grace. Grace is not merely what saves us; it is what trains us. The grammar is striking: 'it' (grace) instructs us — grace is personified as an active, formative teacher. The ethical life Paul has described in 2:1–10 is not produced by trying harder; it is the fruit of grace at work.

The temporal framework is equally important. Grace appeared in the past (the Incarnation), it teaches us in the present, and we look toward the future return of Christ — 'the blessed hope.' This three-tense shape of grace prevents Christianity from becoming either nostalgia (only looking back) or escapism (only looking forward). We are to live godly lives 'in the present age' because of what Christ has done and in anticipation of what He will do.

Verse 14 summarizes the gospel in one sentence: He gave Himself for us to redeem and purify. Redemption is freedom from lawlessness; purification is belonging to Him. The result is a people 'zealous for good deeds' — not to earn salvation but because they belong to the one who gave everything for them. Titus is to proclaim this with full authority and let no one diminish it.

GREEK WORD STUDY

English Word	Greek (Transliteration)	Definition
Grace	χάρις (<i>charis</i>)	Unmerited divine favor — the free gift of God that initiates, sustains, and completes salvation.
Salvation	σωτήριος (<i>soterion</i>)	Saving; deliverance — rescue from sin and its consequences through faith in Christ.
Sensible	σωφρόνως (<i>sophronos</i>)	With soundness of mind; wisely — living with clear-headed self-governance.
Blessed Hope	μακαρία ἐλπίς (<i>makaria elpis</i>)	Happy; blessed expectation — a hope so certain and so good it already brings joy in the present.

Redeem	λυτρόω (<i>lytroo</i>)	To release by payment of ransom; to liberate from slavery to sin. A price was paid — Christ Himself.
Purify	καθαρίζω (<i>katharizo</i>)	To cleanse; to free from contamination. Salvation is not just rescue but transformation.
Zealous	ζηλωτής (<i>zelotes</i>)	One who is on fire with enthusiasm; burning with passion. Good works are not reluctant duty but eager love.
Age	αἰών (<i>aion</i>)	Age; era — the present order of things, between Christ's first and second coming.

STUDY QUESTIONS

Study Questions

21. Paul says grace 'instructs us' (v.12). In what ways is grace a teacher? How does understanding what God has freely given change your motivation for how you live?
22. The 'blessed hope' (v.13) is Christ's return. How does actively anticipating the return of Christ affect the way you make decisions, treat people, and spend your time today?
23. Christ 'gave Himself for us to redeem us' (v.14). What does it mean personally that Christ's death was an intentional act of self-giving — not an accident or merely a transaction?
24. Paul describes believers as 'a people for His own possession, zealous for good deeds.' Do you experience your Christian life as something you belong to, or mostly as something you have to maintain? What's the difference?

NOTES ON TITUS 2:11–15

Chapter Review Questions

Review the big picture of Chapter 2 before moving into Chapter 3.

- 25.** Chapter 2 gives instructions to older men, older women, younger women, younger men, slaves, and Titus himself. What is the common thread running through all these instructions?
- 26.** How does the theological foundation of 2:11–14 (grace, redemption, the blessed hope) underpin the practical instructions of 2:1–10? Why does the order matter — ethics first or gospel first?
- 27.** Paul mentions three timeframes in 2:11–13: the past appearing of grace, the present age, and the future return of Christ. How do all three shape your Christian life right now?
- 28.** What one thing from Chapter 2 do you most want to apply to your own life this week?

CHAPTER 2 — PERSONAL REFLECTIONS

Chapter 3 • Heirs of Grace, Doers of Good

Titus 3:1–7 — From What We Were to What We Are

Remind the believers to submit to rulers and authorities, to be obedient and ready for every good work, to malign no one, and to be peaceable and gentle, showing full consideration to everyone. For at one time we too were foolish, disobedient, misled, and enslaved to all sorts of desires and pleasures — living in malice and envy, being hated and hating one another. But when the kindness of God our Savior and His love for mankind appeared, He saved us, not by the righteous deeds we had done, but according to His mercy, through the washing of new birth and renewal by the Holy Spirit. This is the Spirit He poured out on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Savior, so that, having been justified by His grace, we would become heirs with the hope of eternal life.

COMMENTARY

Paul opens chapter 3 with a call to civic submission — submit to rulers, obey, be ready for good work. The motivation is missional: peaceable, gentle, considerate believers create opportunities to share the faith that has changed them. But Paul immediately grounds this call in theology: we should be peaceable toward others because we remember what we used to be.

Verse 3 is one of the most self-aware passages in all of Paul's letters. He doesn't say 'you were like this' — he says 'we too were.' Foolish, disobedient, misled, enslaved, malicious, envious, hated and hating. This is not rhetoric; it is autobiography. The believer's humility toward outsiders grows from honest memory of what grace rescued them from.

Verses 4–7 contain the most concentrated statement of the gospel in Titus: not our deeds but His mercy; washing of new birth; renewal by the Holy Spirit; justification by grace; heirs of eternal life. Every component of salvation is present. Salvation is trinitarian (God our Savior, the Spirit, Christ our Savior), monergistic (not by our deeds), transformative (new birth and renewal), forensic (justified), and future-oriented (heirs with the hope of eternal life).

GREEK WORD STUDY

English Word	Greek (Transliteration)	Definition
Rulers	ἀρχαῖς (archai)	Governing rulers; magistrates — those holding highest civil authority.
Authorities	ἐξουσίαις (exousiais)	Delegated powers; those exercising official authority. Together with archai, covers the full range of civil government.
Peaceable	ἀμάχους (amachous)	Non-contentious; without fighting — from alpha-privative + machē (battle).

Foolish	<i>άνόητοι (anoetoi)</i>	Without understanding; spiritually blind to truth — the mind apart from grace.
Enslaved	<i>δουλεύοντες (douleuontes)</i>	Serving as slaves — in complete bondage to passions and pleasures. Paul knows this from the inside.
Kindness	<i>χρηστότης (chrestotes)</i>	Goodness; graciousness — a genuinely good disposition toward others. A fruit of the Spirit (Gal 5:22).
Love for Mankind	<i>φιλανθρωπία (philanthropia)</i>	Love for humanity — the only NT use applied directly to God. A stunning declaration of divine affection.
Mercy	<i>ἐλεος (eleos)</i>	Tender compassion — echoes the Hebrew hesed (steadfast lovingkindness). Salvation is mercy, not merit.
Regeneration	<i>παλιγγενεσίας (palingenesias)</i>	New birth; regeneration — from palin (again) + genesis (origin). The Spirit's creative act within.
Renewal	<i>ἀνακαινώσεως (anakainōseōs)</i>	Ongoing renovation — the Spirit's continuous work making the believer new. From ana (again) + kainō (make new).
Justified	<i>δικαιωθέντες (dikaiōthentes)</i>	Declared righteous — a forensic verdict: not guilty and righteous in Christ. Aorist: a completed act.
Heirs	<i>κληρονόμοι (klēronómoi)</i>	Those with a legal right to inherit — a guaranteed, secured inheritance. We are co-heirs with Christ.

STUDY QUESTIONS

Study Questions

29. Paul says 'we too were' (v.3) — lumping himself with the believers he is writing about. Why is this autobiographical 'we' important? How does remembering your own past shape your attitude toward non-believers?

Study questions continue on the next page →

- 30.** Verse 5 says God saved us 'not by righteous deeds... but according to His mercy.' Why is it so hard for people to accept that salvation is entirely mercy with no contribution from us?
- 31.** The Holy Spirit is mentioned three times in connection with salvation here (washing, renewal, poured out). What is the Spirit's role in your own experience of becoming and continuing as a Christian?
- 32.** We are described as 'heirs with the hope of eternal life' (v.7). What does it mean to you personally that you are an heir — that eternal life is something you have a legal claim to in Christ?

NOTES ON TITUS 3:1-7

NOTES ON TITUS 3:1-7 (CONTINUED)

Titus 3:8–15 — Profitable Things and Final Instructions

This saying is trustworthy. And I want you to emphasize these things, so that those who have believed God will take care to devote themselves to good deeds. These things are excellent and profitable for the people. But avoid foolish controversies, genealogies, arguments, and quarrels about the law, because these things are pointless and worthless. Reject a divisive man after a first and second admonition, knowing that such a man is corrupt and sinful; he is self-condemned. As soon as I send Artemas or Tychicus to you, make every effort to come to me at Nicopolis, because I have decided to winter there. Do your best to equip Zenas the lawyer and Apollos, so that they will have everything they need. And our people must also learn to devote themselves to good works in order to meet the pressing needs of others, so that they will not be unfruitful. All who are with me send you greetings. Greet those who love us in the faith. Grace be with all of you.

COMMENTARY

Paul stamps the gospel summary of 3:4–7 with the 'faithful saying' formula — *pistos ho logos* — a phrase he uses five times across the Pastoral Epistles to flag statements of the highest doctrinal importance. He then makes the connection explicit: sound theology produces good works. Titus is to 'emphasize' (*diabebaiousthai* — insist confidently, press hard) these truths because they are 'excellent and profitable' — a deliberate echo and contrast with 'pointless and worthless' in verse 9.

The contrast between profitable and worthless is sharpened in verses 9–11: foolish controversies, genealogies, legal disputes are *ἀνωφελεῖς* (unprofitable) and *μάταιοι* (futile). The deliberately divisive person (*hairetikon* — factious, the root of our word 'heretic') is to receive two admonitions, then be rejected. The church's unity and health matter more than endlessly debating someone determined to destroy it.

The closing verses (12–15) are personal and warm — Artemas, Tychicus, Nicopolis, Zenas, Apollos. Real names, real logistics, real relationships. The letter ends where it began: grace be with all of you. Grace is both the opening gift and the final word. The entire letter is framed by the undeserved favor of God.

GREEK WORD STUDY

English Word	Greek (Transliteration)	Definition
Trustworthy	<i>πιστός ὁ λόγος (pistos ho logos)</i>	Faithful is the word — a Pastoral Epistle formula (5x) marking a statement of highest doctrinal weight.
Emphasize	<i>διαβεβαιοῦσθαι (diabebaiousthai)</i>	To insist confidently; to affirm emphatically. The <i>dia-</i> prefix intensifies the urgency.
Devote	<i>προϊστασθαι (proistasthai)</i>	To apply oneself; to be fully committed to. Grace received produces grace displayed in action.

Profitable	ὠφέλιμα (<i>ophelima</i>)	Beneficial; bringing real practical gain. Contrast with 'pointless and worthless' in v.9.
Controversies	ζητήσεις (<i>zeteseis</i>)	Speculative debates — producing heat, not light. Paul calls them 'foolish' (<i>mōras</i>).
Pointless	ἀνωφελεῖς (<i>anōpheleis</i>)	Unprofitable; bringing no benefit. Alpha-privative + <i>ōpheleō</i> — the direct opposite of 'profitable.'
Divisive	αἰρετικόν (<i>hairetikon</i>)	Factionous; choosing to cause division. Root of 'heretic.' Someone who picks discord over unity.
Admonition	νουθεσίαν (<i>nouthesian</i>)	Loving counsel aimed at correction — literally 'placing truth in the mind' (<i>nous</i> + <i>tithēmi</i>).
Self-condemned	αὐτοκατάκριτος (<i>autokatakritos</i>)	Condemned by one's own actions — a hapax legomenon found only here in all of Greek literature.
Grace	χάρις (<i>charis</i>)	Grace — the same word that opened the letter (1:4). It is both the beginning and the end.

STUDY QUESTIONS

Study Questions

33. Paul says sound gospel truth should lead believers to 'devote themselves to good deeds' (v.8). Why is good theology supposed to produce good works? What happens when doctrine and life become disconnected?
34. Paul uses a striking contrast: things that are 'profitable' vs. things that are 'pointless and worthless' (vv.8–9). What kinds of theological discussions or church debates do you think fall into each category?
35. The 'divisive person' receives two warnings before being rejected (vv.10–11). Why two warnings rather than immediate removal or endless patience? What does this two-step process say about how the church should handle conflict?
36. The letter begins and ends with 'grace' (1:4 and 3:15). In one sentence, what has this study of Titus taught you about grace that you did not know — or know as deeply — before?

NOTES ON TITUS 3:8–15

Chapter Review Questions

Final review questions for Chapter 3 and the whole letter.

- 37.** Titus 3:4–7 is one of the most complete summaries of the gospel in the New Testament. List every element of salvation mentioned. What does it tell you that salvation is described as the work of all three persons of the Trinity?
- 38.** Throughout the letter Paul contrasts profitable and unprofitable things, sound and unsound doctrine, those who know God and those who deny Him by their actions. What is the common thread in all these contrasts?
- 39.** Looking back over the whole letter: Paul addresses leadership (ch.1), community formation (ch.2), and civic/social life (ch.3). How do all three hold together as one coherent vision for the church in the world?
- 40.** If you had to write one sentence summarizing what Paul's letter to Titus says to you personally, what would it be?

CHAPTER 3 — PERSONAL REFLECTIONS

CHAPTER 3 — PERSONAL REFLECTIONS (CONTINUED)

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Additional Notes & Reflections

Use these pages for your own extended reflections, prayer journal entries, cross-references you want to track, or notes from group discussion.

EXTENDED NOTES

EXTENDED NOTES (CONTINUED)

EXTENDED NOTES (CONTINUED)

PRAYER JOURNAL (CONTINUED)

PRAYER JOURNAL (CONTINUED)

CROSS-REFERENCES & FURTHER STUDY

CROSS-REFERENCES & FURTHER STUDY (CONTINUED)

CROSS-REFERENCES & FURTHER STUDY (CONTINUED)

GROUP DISCUSSION NOTES

GROUP DISCUSSION NOTES (CONTINUED)

GROUP DISCUSSION NOTES (CONTINUED)

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About the Author

Nathanial M. Emmert

Nathanial M. Emmert holds a Bachelor of Science in Religion from Liberty University, where his love for careful biblical study was shaped and deepened. Since graduation, he has continued to pursue serious engagement with Scripture as a layperson — a conviction that faithful study of God’s Word is not reserved for the pulpit but belongs to every believer.

Nathanial’s approach to Bible study reflects a passion for the original languages, theological precision, and the kind of personal application that changes how one lives — not just what one knows. The letter to Titus, with its insistence that sound doctrine and godly living are inseparable, has been a particularly formative text in his own walk of faith.

He lives in Virginia with his wife and family, where he continues to study, write, and share his love of Scripture with those around him.

“For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to everyone.” — Titus 2:11

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6-Week Group Study Reading Plan

This plan is designed for small groups, Sunday school classes, or personal study. Each session covers one or two passage sections and can comfortably fit a 60–90 minute group meeting. Read the passage and commentary before the session, then use the study questions as the basis for discussion.

How to Use This Plan

Before each session: Read the passage aloud. Work through the commentary and Greek word table at your own pace.

During the session: Use the study questions to guide group discussion. Aim for application, not just information.

After the session: Write your reflections in the notes pages. Return to them as the weeks go on to see how your thinking develops.

Week	Session	Passage(s)	Theme Focus	Session Goal
1	Session 1	<i>Titus 1:1–4</i>	Grace, Truth & Godliness	<i>Establish the letter’s foundation: what Paul’s mission is and why it matters for Titus’s task in Crete.</i>
2	Session 2	<i>Titus 1:5–9</i>	Qualifications for Elders	<i>Examine the character portrait of a faithful leader. Discuss how these qualities apply beyond formal leadership.</i>
3	Session 3	<i>Titus 1:10–16</i>	False Teaching & Rebuke	<i>Understand the threat false teachers posed and why firm correction is an act of love, not harshness.</i>
4	Session 4	<i>Titus 2:1–10</i>	Sound Doctrine for Every Generation	<i>Apply Paul’s group-specific instructions. Explore the mentoring chain from older to younger believers.</i>
5	Session 5	<i>Titus 2:11–15</i>	The Grace That Trains	<i>Study the theological heartbeat of the letter. Discuss how grace is both the source of salvation and the power of sanctification.</i>
6	Session 6	<i>Titus 3:1–15</i>	Heirs of Grace, Doers of Good	<i>Bring the whole letter together: from what we were (3:3) to what we are (3:4–7) and what we do (3:8, 14).</i>

Memory Verse for Each Week

Week 1	<i>"Paul, a servant of God and an apostle of Jesus Christ for the faith of God's elect." — Titus 1:1</i>
Week 2	<i>"He must hold firmly to the faithful word as it was taught, so that he can encourage others by sound teaching." — Titus 1:9</i>
Week 3	<i>"They profess to know God, but by their actions they deny Him." — Titus 1:16</i>
Week 4	<i>"In everything, show yourself to be an example by doing good works." — Titus 2:7</i>
Week 5	<i>"For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to everyone." — Titus 2:11</i>
Week 6	<i>"He saved us, not by the righteous deeds we had done, but according to His mercy." — Titus 3:5</i>

Notes — Group Study Reading Plan

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Recommended Reading & Further Study

The following resources will deepen your study of Titus, the Pastoral Epistles, and the theological themes this letter contains. They range from accessible introductions to more scholarly works, and are organized by category.

Commentaries on Titus & the Pastoral Epistles

The Letters to Timothy and Titus

Philip Towner — New International Commentary on the New Testament • Eerdmans, 2006

The most thorough modern critical commentary on the Pastorals. Rigorous exegesis with careful attention to historical context and Greek. An essential reference for serious students.

1–2 Timothy and Titus

Thomas Lea & Hayne Griffin — New American Commentary • B&H Publishing, 1992

An evangelical commentary that balances scholarly depth with pastoral application. Accessible and reliable for both personal and group study.

Guard the Truth: The Message of 1 Timothy & Titus

John Stott — The Bible Speaks Today • IVP, 1996

Stott's characteristic clarity and warmth make this an ideal first commentary. Excellent for devotional reading alongside deeper study tools.

1 & 2 Timothy, Titus

William Mounce — Word Biblical Commentary • Zondervan, 2000

An exhaustive technical commentary with extensive Greek analysis. Best for those who want to go deep into the original language and text-critical questions.

New Testament Introduction

An Introduction to the New Testament

D.A. Carson & Douglas Moo — Zondervan, 2005

The standard evangelical NT introduction. The section on the Pastoral Epistles (pp. 581–584) provided the background used in this study. Thorough, balanced, and scholarly.

New Testament Survey

Merrill Tenney — Eerdmans, revised edition

A classic survey text, accessible to newer students, that covers the historical, literary, and theological context of each New Testament book.

Greek Language & Word Study Tools

Mounce's Complete Expository Dictionary of Old and New Testament Words

William Mounce — Zondervan, 2006

The most user-friendly word study tool for those without formal Greek training. Reliable, comprehensive, and accessible.

Vine's Complete Expository Dictionary

W.E. Vine — Thomas Nelson, 1996

A classic and affordable reference that has served Bible students for generations. Excellent for quick word studies on key terms like those found in Titus.

Strong's Exhaustive Concordance of the Bible

James Strong — Various publishers • Available free at BibleHub.com

The foundational concordance for English-to-Greek word study. Every Greek word in this study book can be looked up using its Strong's number at BibleHub.com or BlueLetterBible.org.

Theology of Grace, Sanctification & the Christian Life

The Pursuit of Holiness

Jerry Bridges — NavPress, 1978 (multiple editions)

A beloved practical theology of sanctification. Bridges's theme — that grace transforms and does not merely excuse — runs parallel to Titus 2:11–12.

Knowing God

J.I. Packer — IVP, 1973 (multiple editions)

A masterwork of devotional theology. Packer's treatment of God's character — His faithfulness, His grace, His sovereignty — enriches everything Titus teaches about salvation and godliness.

The Gospel & Personal Evangelism

Mark Dever — Crossway, 2007

A short, practical book on the gospel's content and urgency. Helpful for unpacking what Paul means by 'the gospel entrusted to me' in Titus 1:3.

Online Resources

1. BibleHub.com — Free access to interlinear Greek text, Strong's numbers, multiple commentaries, and cross-references for every verse.
2. BlueLetterBible.org — Excellent Greek word study tools, lexicons (including BDAG and Thayer's), and audio resources.
3. Logos Bible Software (logos.com) — The premier digital library for serious Bible study. The commentaries listed above are all available in Logos.
4. The Bible Project (bibleproject.com) — Free, high-quality video overviews of every book of the Bible, including the Pastoral Epistles.
5. VerseByVerseMinistry.org — In-depth, verse-by-verse Bible teaching through books of the Bible, with free video, audio, and written study materials.

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