FURTHER STUDY GUIDE

SAVED BY MERCY, READY FOR GOOD

Historical Background

In the final chapter of his letter, Paul shifts from how believers behave in the church and home (Titus 1–2) to how they live in the broader public square. In the ancient world, Crete was known for political unrest, rebelliousness, and a lack of civic virtue. Paul reminds Titus that the gospel does not just save individuals for eternity; it transforms them into model citizens who adorn the teachings of God through good works and peaceful living.

The chapter hinges on a massive theological truth: believers treat outsiders with grace and gentleness only because they remember the radical mercy God showed them when they were still rebels.

ICEBREAKER QUESTION

Think of a time someone treated you with unexpected kindness or patience when you didn't deserve it. How did that moment change your attitude toward them?

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GROUP DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

GRACE IN THE PUBLIC SQUARE (Titus 3:1–2)

Read Titus 3:1-2, 1 Peter 2:13–15, Proverbs 15:1, Colossians 4:5–6

1. Why does Paul urge believers to be submissive to rulers and ready for every good work, especially in a culture like Crete that was hostile to authority?

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2. Verse 2 instructs us to "speak evil of no one" and "avoid quarreling." In an age of constant online outrage and political division, what does it practically look like to show "perfect courtesy toward all people"?

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3. Where in your daily routine—such as your workplace, neighborhood, or social media—are you most tempted to respond with hostility rather than gentleness?

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SAVED BY MERCY, NOT WORKS (Titus 3:3–8)

Read Titus 3:3-8, Ephesians 2:1–5, 2 Timothy 1:9, James 2:17–18

4. Look at the description of our past lives in verse 3 (foolish, disobedient, led astray, slaves to passions). Why is it healthy for Christians to regularly remember what they were saved from?

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5. Verses 4–7 explain that God saved us not because of righteous works we did, but by His own mercy through the washing of regeneration and renewal by the Holy Spirit. How does understanding this protect us from both spiritual pride and spiritual burnout?

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6. In verse 8, Paul tells Titus to insist on these gospel truths so that believers will be "careful to devote themselves to good works." How does the gospel serve as the engine for doing good, rather than the reward for doing good?

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GUARDING UNITY AND SUPPORTING THE MISSION (Titus 3:9–15)

Read Titus 9-15, 2 Timothy 2:23–24, Romans 16:17, 3 John 1:5–8

7. Paul warns against "foolish controversies" and "quarrels about the law" because they are unprofitable and worthless (v. 9). How can a group discern between a vital truth worth defending and a pointless debate worth walking away from?

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8. Verses 10–11 outline a clear, two-warning process for handling a divisive person before having nothing more to do with them. Why does Scripture take church unity so seriously, and why are swift, loving boundaries necessary?

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9. In verses 12–14, Paul mentions specific coworkers like Artemas, Tychicus, Zenas, and Apollos, urging the church to meet their urgent needs so they won't be "unfruitful." How can our group intentionally support missionaries, church planters, or local ministries right now?

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PERSONAL REFLECTION

Scripture Reading: Titus 3:3–7

It is easy to feel frustrated when the people around us act foolishly, speak harshly, or stir up conflict. Whether it is a difficult coworker, a sharp comment online, or a neighbor who tests our patience, our natural instinct is to push back, prove we are right, or match their tone.

In Titus 3, Paul interrupts that instinct with a sobering reminder: *"For we ourselves were once foolish, disobedient, led astray..."* (v. 3). Before we ever knew Christ, we were the difficult ones. We were enslaved to our own desires, stubborn in our ways, and actively resisting God.

Yet God did not meet our rebellion with outrage or dismiss us in frustration. Instead, when His *"goodness and loving kindness... appeared, he saved us, not because of works done by us in righteousness, but according to his own mercy"* (vv. 4–5). He washed us clean, poured out His Spirit generously, and made us heirs of eternal life—not because we earned a single ounce of it, but purely because He is good.

When you truly grasp how much mercy you have received, it becomes nearly impossible to look down on someone else. Grace removes our sense of superiority and replaces it with humility. Today, you don't have to win every argument or defend your ego. Because God has already rescued you and secured your future, you are free to absorb hostility with patience, speak with gentleness, and show the same unexpected kindness to a watching world that Jesus first showed to you.

QUESTIONS | REFLECTIONS | OBSERVATIONS

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