



Light Your World

September 21-27, 2025

MAIN POINT

Salvation in Christ leads to a lifestyle of good works.

INTRODUCTION

Gather photographs of members of the group when they were young (or photos of well-known people when they were young). Invite the group to identify who each person is.

What made it easy or difficult to match names with faces? Who has changed the most? Who has changed the least?

Physical changes as well as changes in hairstyles and fashions are obvious. Likewise, Christians undergo change—transformation—as a result of their Christian commitment. Our goal is to make sure that change is obvious to those around us.

In his letter to Titus, Paul urged the Christians on Crete to look at the change in their lives since they became Christians and demonstrate that change through their good works.

UNDERSTANDING

READ [TITUS 3:1-3](#).

What is significant about the fact that Paul called on Titus to “remind” his congregation of the series of imperatives in verses 1-3?

Paul began this portion of his letter with a command for Titus to “remind” his congregants of several things. This was not to be a one-time thing for Titus, for the verb is structured in such a way as to imply that Titus was to “keep on reminding” his congregation several things. Clearly, these imperatives were not new to the Cretan congregation, and they would never get to the place where they didn’t need reminding. The practical implication for them—and us—is fascinating: even though we have the Holy Spirit to empower us to live lives of obedience, we continually need to be reminded of our need to live lives that reflect the holiness and grace of the God who saved us. The Holy Spirit works in us through the process of reminders.

What were the six imperatives that Paul gave? What are some practical examples of how each of these imperatives can be lived out daily?

Have you ever experienced a situation in which unbelievers were able to watch your reaction to a challenging life situation? What happened?

Why did Paul ask the Cretans to consider their former life ([v. 3](#)) to help them live according to their new life in Christ ([vv. 1-2](#))?

How does considering our life before Jesus help us live more like Jesus?

A common misconception of the Christian life is that soon after one begins following Jesus, that person gives less attention to his or her sinful nature and more attention to his or her practices of personal holiness. This is only partly true. As we grow in our relationship with God, we not only become more aware of God's holiness and our need to live holy lives, but also we become more aware of our sinful state. The effect is that we grow in our gratitude for the grace God has shown us in Jesus' life, death, and resurrection. Perhaps this is why Paul reminded the Cretans of their former lives—so that they would revel in the grace God showed them in Jesus. Verses 4-7 affirm this.

READ TITUS 3:4-7.

How can we know for sure that salvation is purely a matter of God's mercy and not a reward for our good works?

What difference does it make that God saves us out of His great mercy and not because of anything we do?

There are many paradoxes to the gospel, one of which is that it exhorts us to good works while simultaneously teaching that such good works do not make us right with God. Rather, works show the world and confirm to those who doubt that God has, indeed, graciously saved us by Jesus, the only righteous One. We did nothing to earn or deserve this—God acted according to His nature, which is one of kindness and love. For this reason, we give all honor and glory to Him, not ourselves. Any righteous acts we do are strictly the result of His great love and kindness at work in our lives.

READ TITUS 3:8.

**What was Titus to do with Paul's imperatives and gospel message in verses 1-7?
What was Paul's concern?**

Paul's desire was for Titus to stress the gospel and its implications to the Cretan congregation. Why? Because a gospel-centered practice of good works is profitable for all. We are to live according to the gospel, because the gospel is good for all who see its evidence in our lives.

APPLICATION

How do our good works benefit others? How do they benefit us?

How can you say "thank you" to God in the next few days for His saving grace toward you?

**What is one way you can serve others in your home, workplace, or church this week?
How will you hold yourself accountable to serving them?**

PRAYER

Thank God for the salvation He has graciously given you. Ask Him to help you demonstrate to others that trusting in Christ for salvation has made a difference in your life and resulted in your good deeds.

COMMENTARY

TITUS 3:1-8

Paul moved his thoughts to the duties of all believers, especially in relation to the government and the non-Christian world. Verses 1-2 remind Christians of their duty to government leaders and authorities. It is important to note that early Christian teaching was not limited to the way of salvation, but included exhortations concerning the practical implications for daily life (see Romans 13:1-7; 1 Peter 2:13-17).

Some might suggest that such a response to ungodly leaders was inappropriate. Paul met this objection by reminding them of their own pre-Christian condition. It is only by God's "mercy" that we are saved. God brought about our salvation by changing our lives through the work of the Holy Spirit who was "poured out on us". By God's gracious gift of Christ's righteousness to us God now declares us justified in His sight and heirs of eternal life.

3:1 The phrase "ready for every good work" refers back to 1:16 and 2:14. The false teachers were "disqualified for any good work" (1:16). One of the purposes of the cross was to create a people "eager to do good works" (2:14). And here, in contrast to the false teachers, Titus was to teach the people to be "ready for every good work." The qualities encouraged here (vv. 1-3) are in contrast to the description of the false teachers in 1:10-16.

3:3-7 These verses provide the doctrinal basis for the teaching in verses 1-2.

3:4 The words "goodness of God and His love for mankind" stand in stark contrast to the description of lost humanity in verse 3. The difference is due to the appearance of God our Savior, Jesus Christ.

3:5 Salvation comes not by works but through the washing of regeneration and renewal by the Holy Spirit. Some interpreters have understood this as saying that baptism ("the washing") causes salvation, but in the context human deeds are clearly downplayed and the emphasis is on divine action and initiative. The washing described here is the spiritual cleansing that is symbolized outwardly by water baptism.

3:8 The command "to insist on these things" is similar to 2:15. Note the emphasis on good works as a mark of believers (v. 1; 1:16; 2:14).

