

MEFC Community Group Study Guide

For the Week of February 2nd-8th

Getting Started

1. What sort of familiarity do you have with Paul's Letter to Titus? Have you ever spent any significant time getting to know its contents? If so, please share a bit with the group.

Digging Deeper

2. If you'll open up your Bible to the book of Titus, the first thing you're likely to notice is that it's not all that long. At only three chapters altogether, it's the sixth shortest book in Holy Scripture (just 659 words). Begin your group time by reading the entire letter out loud. What are your first impressions? Make sure everyone has the opportunity to contribute.

3. The opening three verses of this letter represents a single, carefully crafted sentence (1:1-3). Like an overture to a symphony, it introduces themes that will emerge again at different points throughout the letter. What catches your eye in these verses? Why?

4. Paul refers to Titus as "my true child in a common faith" (1:4; see also 1 Timothy 1:2, 18; 2 Timothy 1:2; 2:1). Nevertheless, Paul (so far as we know) was a single man without any biological or legal children of his own. What is he communicating to Titus (and Timothy) with these words? Are there any Christians in your life that you consider your spiritual children? How about a spiritual father or mother? If so, please share with the group.

5. Don Carson likes to say that the qualifications for an elder in the local church are remarkable for being unremarkable (1:5-9; 1 Timothy 3:1-7; 1 Peter 5:1-5). In other words, if you look carefully, apart from a handful of key areas (male in gender, "able to teach", "not a recent convert"), there's nothing an elder is called to be that all Christians everywhere aren't called to be. How does this make you feel? What does this communicate to us as a church?

6. This letter carries a focus on identifying and confronting false teaching (1:9-16; 3:9-11). Though it's difficult to know with precision what this false teaching was, we hear echoes of the same doctrinal poison in other letters of the New Testament (see 1 and 2 Timothy and Colossians). What sorts of false teachings are alive in the church today? Gleaning from the wisdom in these passages in Titus, how ought we to address such false teachings?

7. Without a doubt, a call to "good works" is a crucial theme in this letter (1:16; 2:5, 7, 14; 3:1, 5, 8, 14) as well as other portions of the New Testament (see Matthew 5:16; Acts 9:36; Ephesians 2:10; 1 Timothy 2:10; 5:10, 25; 6:18; and Hebrews 10:24-25). What, specifically, does Paul mean by this phrase here in Titus? How do you know? What would our church increasingly begin to look like if we were "zealous for good works" (2:14)? What sort of an impact might this have on our surrounding community?

8. The soon return of our Lord is yet another important theme we encounter in Paul's Letter to Titus (1:2; 2:12-13; 3:7). Some people tend to think of a focus on eschatology as a distraction from our mission, yet here in this letter Paul appears to present it as the destination of our mission. How does the truth of the return of Christ function in these three chapters? Does it function this way in your life? Explain.

An Overview of the Letter of Paul to Titus
Sermon Notes for 2/2/20
“Piercing the Darkness”:
Local Church Mission in Paul’s Letter to Titus

Our 2025 Vision beckons us to burn hot for Christ’s mission, and Paul’s Letter to Titus is a flamethrower

Author:

Date:

Recipient:

Destination:

Five Keys to Piercing the Darkness With the Light of Christ:

1. Appoint _____ (1:5-9; 2:1, 7-8, 15; 3:12-13)

2. Resist _____ (1:10-16; 3:9-11)

3. Cultivate _____ - _____ (1:1; 2:2-6, 9-10, 11-14; 3:4-8)

4. Be zealous for _____ (1:16; 2:5, 7, 14; 3:1, 5, 8, 14)

5. Set your hope on Christ’s _____ (1:2; 2:12-13; 3:7)

Next Week: Titus 1:1-3 - “Paul’s Secure Mission”