



## **BIG IDEA**

Good works don't save us, but they show that we belong to Jesus.

## **BIBLE**

Titus 1:1-4; Acts 9:1-11; 2 Corinthians 8:23; Galatians 2:2-5

## **ABOUT THIS WEEK**

Paul wrote this letter to Titus to help churches on the island of Crete live like true followers of Jesus. In a place where people were dishonest and selfish, Paul reminded them—and us—that our actions should match our faith.

*WHAT? What are we talking about today?*

### **HOOK – Nobody likes a hypocrite**

- *Have you ever had someone promise they'd do something... and then totally flake?*
  - *Maybe it was a teammate who said they'd show up to practice but never did. Or someone who talks about kindness but is always tearing people down behind their backs.*
  - *When someone's actions don't match their words, we notice.*
    - *And if we're honest... sometimes, we're that person too.*
    - Here comes Titus.
- Today, we're starting a series on this short little book of the Bible. But even though it's only 3 chapters, we're going to spend the entire Summer looking at it and we really hope that you learn a couple of things:
  - The Bible is RICH! People have been studying and learning from this book for centuries and that's because there is no limit to it's depth. As we spend 7 weeks going through these 3 chapters, I want you to pay attention to how much you can get out of such a small piece of the Bible.
  - We want you to learn HOW to read the Bible for all it's worth.
  - But most importantly, we want you to see how what you learn should directly effect the way you live.
- But unfortunately, that doesn't always come so easy.
  - As a matter of fact, just a few minutes ago when I talked about people who say one thing, but do another, if we're honest... that might remind you of some people who call themselves Christians.
- Let me ask you, how many of you know someone who says they're a Christian, but their lives don't really reflect Jesus?

- Now, you don't have to raise your hand here, but how many of us would say that there are times when we act differently at church than we do during the rest of the week?
- This is the reason why Paul wrote the letter to Titus and why it's still relevant for us today.

## SO WHAT? Why does it matter to God and to us?

### The Importance of Context:

- Now the majority of your time studying this Letter will be in your small groups, but I want to help us set up a framework and then you'll dive into the details later. But let's start here.
- I want you to imagine you're walking down the sidewalk and you find a piece of paper on the ground. You pick it up and start reading it, but it seems a little confusing to you. It's like you only have one side of a story. Let's discuss together, feel free to shout out your answers, but what would help you make sense of the letter?
  - Collect answers from the audience. These answers might include: *Who wrote it? Who was it written to? When was it written? Why was it written? Were there any letters before or after this? Etc.*
  - This is important because reading the Bible is a lot like this.
    - In 2025, we stumble across this letter, but there is so much to uncover once we know the original **context – the details that help us understand the full story**
    - It's important to remember that the Bible wasn't written in a vacuum, but it was written by real people, to real people, who were facing real problems in a real world.
- Now, while you're going to uncover a little more about each of the people in this story during your small group time, let me get the ball rolling for us:
  - There are 3 main people you need to know:
    - Paul – The Author
    - Titus – The recipient
    - The Cretans – The people of the city where Titus was being sent
      - To be called a Cretan was a slang way of saying you had no moral compass.
  - Paul left Titus on the Island of Crete, which was basically Vegas times 1000!
  - The people were wild, known for lying and partying
  - But then they would become Christians but their lives wouldn't change.
  - On top of that, false teachers came in and started twisting the message of grace in one of two ways:
    - Grace as a license to sin – “Since we're forgiven by God no matter what, can't we do whatever we want?”
    - Legalism – “You're not really saved unless you follow 100% of the rules 100% of the time.”
  - And Paul was writing to them to answer one key question: **“If we're saved by God's grace, do our actions still matter?”**
    - Paul's answer was an emphatic **ABSOLUTELY!** Not because good works save us, but because they show that we've been saved.

### Words Without Action = Hypocrisy

- Paul is calling out people who talk the talk but don't walk the walk
- That kind of faith confuses people and hurts our witness.
  - Titus 1:16 – They claim to know God, but their actions deny Him.

### Grace Isn't Permission to Live However We Want

- Grace changes us.
- It teaches us to say no to sin and yes to godly lives.
  - Titus 2:11-12

## NOW WHAT? What does God want us to do about it?

### Let Your Life Preach Louder Than Your Lips

- Don't just wear the Christian label – live the life.
- In your friendships, social media, school, and family, does your life match your faith?
  - Ask yourself: *If someone were to watch my life for a week, would they know that I follow Jesus?*

---

**Closing // Set up discussion**

- That's what I want you to consider as you go through your discussion today.
- **Invite students to reflect:** *Where am I living one way and claiming another?*
- **Offer a moment of silent prayer:** "God, help my life reflect what I believe."
- **Encourage them:** Jesus doesn't expect perfection, but He does call us to transformation.
- Dismiss them to small groups.