

## Frequently Asked Questions

### Week 3 - Salvation

This week, when I saw that your Frequently Asked Questions were on salvation, I was confident I knew where this would lead. While the Bible has an abundance of material on the subject, I felt sure I would end up in Paul's Epistle (or Letter) to the Romans. Well, I got half of it right. We are looking at one of Paul's letters, but it's a letter to his good friend, and brother in Christ. This week we'll be looking at Paul's letter to Titus.

Titus, along with his letter to Timothy, are known as Paul's pastoral epistles. These letters were written to Titus and Timothy to help them direct and guide others how to preach and/or teach the gospel of Jesus to their flocks. Unfortunately, for Titus, he drew the short straw. Because his flock, the people of Crete, need a little more guidance and direction, a little more reminding, than most. You see, the people of Crete had a well-earned reputation of being difficult, a little brutish, or maybe just plain in your face. So, in Titus 3:1-11, Paul gives Titus some very specific direction.

*Remind them to be submissive to rulers and authorities, to be obedient, to be ready for every good work, <sup>2</sup>to speak evil of no one, to avoid quarreling, to be gentle, and to show perfect courtesy toward all people. <sup>3</sup>For we ourselves were once foolish, disobedient, led astray, slaves to various passions and pleasures, passing our days in malice and envy, hated by others and hating one another. <sup>4</sup>But when the goodness and loving kindness of God our Savior appeared, <sup>5</sup>he saved us, not because of works done by us in righteousness, but according to his own mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewal of the Holy Spirit, <sup>6</sup>whom he poured out on us richly through Jesus Christ our Savior, <sup>7</sup>so that being justified by his grace we might become heirs according to the hope of eternal life. <sup>8</sup>The saying is trustworthy, and I want you to insist on these things, so that those who have believed in God may be careful to devote themselves to good works. These things are excellent and profitable for people. <sup>9</sup>But avoid foolish controversies, genealogies, dissensions, and quarrels about the law, for they are unprofitable and worthless. <sup>10</sup>As for a*

*person who stirs up division, after warning him once and then twice, have nothing more to do with him, <sup>11</sup> knowing that such a person is warped and sinful; he is self-condemned. Titus 3:1-11 ESV*

I love the way Paul begins Titus 3. He simply says, “Remind them.” I think he’s telling us when you’re teaching the gospel, you don’t need to get overly academic. Just remind them about already know. You might argue the point, but I don’t think the phrase “remind them” applies only to verse 1. I think the whole chapter is a reminder of what we should already know. In verses 1-4 Paul reminds us how we should act with each other, That we should always strive to be humble and obedient and remember that there was a time when we weren’t. In verses 5-8 Paul remind us that we should never forget that we were saved by God based completely on His goodness and love. That our salvation had nothing to do with our righteous works. And finally, in verses 9-11 Paul reminds us that we should always continue to do good those good works. That they are the evidence of our salvation.

When I read this chapter, I’ll have to admit that I am more than a little ashamed that I have to be reminded of any of this, especially verses 5-8. How could I ever forget that God sacrificed His Son, that Jesus willingly sacrificed Himself, and that I had to do nothing? How could I ever forget that? I don’t know, but I do. But the fact that Paul is writing this tells me that the people of Crete did, that Timothy and Titus did, and yes, even Paul from time to time did as well. But that doesn’t make it right, that just makes it human. But when you think about it, isn’t a large part of the Christian life about becoming a little less human, and a whole lot more like Jesus.

Our salvation is kind of an odd thing. On the one hand, it is a moment in time, but on the other, it is a process that we must work at daily. That means there will be times when we forget the obvious. That we don’t do the right things. Those are the times when we need a Paul, a Timothy, or a Titus, or even ourselves with a friendly reminder of who we are, and whose we are. May it be so.