

Dear Heavenly Father,

Praise

Paul said, “But when the goodness and loving kindness of God our Savior appeared, he saved us, not because of works done by us in righteousness, but according to his own mercy” (Tit 3:4–5). I praise you today for your mercy to me! I was once “foolish, disobedient, a slave to various passions and pleasures,” but in your goodness and loving kindness, you sent your Son to save me from my sins. Praise the Lord!

Today in Your Word

Today you shared with me Paul’s letter to Titus. Paul called Titus “my true child in a common faith” (Tit 1:4), and this implies that he was Paul’s convert, most likely won during Paul’s early ministry in Tarsus and Syrian Antioch. Titus was an uncircumcised Greek, and he was evidently a strong Christian, for Paul took him to Jerusalem as evidence that the Gentiles were saved by faith in Christ apart from the law (Gal 2:3–5). Titus may have traveled with Paul on his other missionary journeys, and on more than one occasion, Paul sent Titus to Corinth on important missions. After Paul was acquitted in Rome, he and Titus worked together on the island of Crete, and when Paul left for Nicopolis, he asked Titus to remain behind and put things in order. The Cretans were lazy and dishonest by nature, and the church there was troubled by false teachers, loose morals and a lack of godly leadership. In his letter, Paul charged Titus to rebuke sinful practices, teach godly living, and model Christlike character. I was struck by how forceful Paul was in his command to rebuke sin: “rebuke them sharply,” “they must be silenced,” “let no one disregard you,” and “insist on these things.” This teaches me that sin must not be tolerated in the church. Those in leadership are charged to confront believers for their sin, and believers are expected to submit to the rebuke of their leaders. I was also fascinated by Paul’s repeated call for believers to be “self-controlled.” This is a requirement for overseers, and a command for both men and women (Tit 1:8; 2:2, 5–6). This teaches me that self-control is a fundamental characteristic of godly living. I am called to renounce all worldly passions and to resist the desires of the flesh. Indeed, your grace has appeared, training me to deny ungodliness and to live a self-controlled, upright, godly life in this present age (Tit 2:11–12). Paul also exhorted believers to good works, saying over and over again: “be a model of good works,” “be zealous for good works,” “be ready for every good work,” and “devote yourselves to good works.” This teaches me that I must be busy in the service of your Kingdom. We’re all prone to laziness, and I must fight this tendency by actively looking for ways to be fruitful in the work of the ministry.

Reflection

Paul said that an overseer “must hold firm to the trustworthy word as taught, so that he may be able to give instruction in sound doctrine and also to rebuke those who contradict it” (Tit 1:9). Am I able to instruct others in the basics of the Christian faith? Do I rebuke those who deny the truth of the gospel?

Request

Father, I ask that you would help me in all respects to be a model of good works (Tit 2:7). Give me a special outpouring of your grace today and enable me to live an upright and godly life.

Thanksgiving

Thank you for the washing of regeneration and the renewal of the Holy Spirit, whom you have poured out on me richly through Jesus Christ my Savior (Tit 3:5–6). I am justified by your grace—Hallelujah!

In Jesus’ name, Amen.

Suggested Hymn: “The Grace of God” – Clara M. Brooks.

Meditation Verse: Titus 2:11.