

Lesson 2: Ultimate Grace

Objective: The point of the lesson is that your students would understand that salvation through Christ is the fullest expression of God's grace, and that they would be able to identify how God's grace transformed their characters.

Scripture Focus: Titus 3:3-8

Overview: God's kindness and goodness are displayed throughout the Bible. He lavishes blessings on the righteous, and even blesses the unrighteous! Yet, nowhere is God's kindness more extravagantly displayed than through the gift of salvation given through His Son, Jesus. This passage from Titus makes it clear: God's provision of forgiveness from sins and eternal life were motivated by nothing other than His grace. We deserved death because of our sin. But because of God's kindness, He made a means for us to know and serve Him. One of the best things you can help your students do is to articulate how God's grace has transformed them, realizing the difference God's grace has made in their lives. This lesson will equip you to facilitate this level of discussion.

Teacher Prep Video

The *elements Teacher Prep Videos* are short videos designed to help you grasp the main points of the lessons as you prepare to teach.

To access your "grace Teacher Prep Video," click on the URL below.

- <https://youthministry360.com/grace-teacher-prep>

Bible Background

The **Bible Background** is a simple and straightforward way to help you prepare to teach the lesson.

The Details

Who wrote Titus?

The first verses of the epistle establish Paul as the author of Titus. Titus was a contemporary of Paul's, and a fellow Christ-follower.

When was Titus written?

Conservative scholars have long dated the writing of Titus between Paul's first imprisonment and his second imprisonment/death. This would place the writing of Titus sometime in the mid 60's AD.

What was the purpose for writing Titus?

Paul had helped play a role in starting a church on Crete. Titus has stayed to help lead the church in its infancy. Paul wrote to address some heresies cropping up in the church, in addition to addressing matters of church leadership, holy living, and the power of the Gospel.

The Main Point

In the first lesson you learned about what grace is and how it flows from who God is. In this lesson, you'll take it a step further and examine how the Gospel is the fullest expression of God's grace. This passage from Titus shows that God's kindness through the forgiveness of sins and the granting of eternal life were motivated by nothing other than His grace. This Titus passage does a great job of examining the difference in our lives before Christ and our lives after Him. Plus it attributes the change to God's grace, lavishly poured out on us through His Son, Jesus.

Lesson Plan

The Main Event

- **Goal:** The idea is for students understand that salvation through Christ is the fullest expression of God's grace.
- **Set-Up:** None

Can anyone recall what you covered in your previous gathering.

- **Grace can be thought of as the overwhelming goodness of God—His mercy, kindness and ultimately salvation—poured out over us.**
- **Grace flows from God's goodness.**
- **We don't deserve grace, but God gives it to us anyway.**

Today we will be looking at a passage in Paul's letter to Titus.

- **The Epistle of Titus was written to Titus from Paul.**
- **Paul is writing to Titus to encourage him in leadership and devotion to faithfulness, and to knowing and living God's Word.**
- **He challenges Titus to stand up for truth and grace with authority.**

Read Titus 3:3 out loud.

- **Look at that first part of verse 3. Those are some strong words. What are the words Paul listed to describe what a life looks like apart from God? And what do you think he meant by them?**
 - *Answers:*
 - *Foolish:* Not talking about intelligence here. Before Christ, we are ignorant to spiritual things. An unregenerate heart cannot understand the things of God.
 - *Disobedient:* We are rebellious against God.
 - *Deceived:* Satan deceives us, or we are generally deceived by our sin.
 - *Slaves to passions:* We don't just sin apart from Christ, we actively pursue pleasure in ways that are opposite to God's ways.

Second part of verse 3 isn't any better. Paul said apart from Christ we are both malicious (That means mean and harmful) and envious. We hate others. Simply put, without the power of God's grace in and over our lives, we're in pretty sad shape.

Why do you think Paul thought it was important to describe in such detail who we all are before we encounter God's grace in Christ?

- *Answer:* Paul is trying to point out that we cannot accept God's grace until we realize our need for it. Paul brings up all of this to remind us that we're incapable of saving ourselves.

Read Titus 3:4-8 with the students, do you see the difference that God's grace in Christ makes in our lives.

Verse 4 starts with the most powerful three-letter word we could hope to find. What is it?

- *Answer:* “But”
- **What do I mean when I say this word is powerful? Why is it so important in the context of this passage?**
 - *Answer:* Because Paul was describing us as we were apart from Christ. And it was an awful description! God could have left us in our sin. He would have been justified if He did. We deserve it. That “but” represents a turn. A twist. It represents rescue!
- **OK, so, after the “but” Paul writes that the “Kindness and love of God appeared.” Hmmm . . . kindness and love . . . sounds a lot like God’s grace! So, God’s grace erupts onto the scene. Now, look at verse 5 and 6 and tell me exactly what God’s grace accomplished. Take it slow. It’s important.**
 - *Answer:* Lead students to see that we were saved by God’s mercy. More so, we were saved through the Spirit and through Christ’s work on the cross. And all of it was motivated by God’s great mercy.
- **WOW! What an awesome picture! But it’s not quite complete. Verse 7 wraps it up in an amazing bow. Can anyone read this and tell me exactly what Paul is describing?**
 - *Answer:* Remember, to be justified is to be declared innocent of the guilt of our sin. And Paul says that it was God’s grace through Christ that cleansed us!
- **What was the ultimate fruit of God’s grace at work? What did we gain from it?**
 - *Answer:* Eternal life as God’s children, forever in relationship with Him.

God’s grace so amazing how He works *in* grace and *through* grace to create a way for us to be in harmony with Him for all time. Point out that it’s hard to fathom at times it’s so awesome!

God doesn’t withhold His grace from us. In fact, His grace motivated Him to send His own Son to undergo an unfathomable sacrifice on our behalf. His grace is radically aimed at us. We can’t earn it. We can’t justify it. It is given freely. And it is life changing!

- **God in His goodness changes our eternal path through the message of His grace. It’s only because of the death and resurrection of Jesus that we can experience this new life. When we begin to forget this, we lose sight of what grace truly is. If we’re followers of Jesus, we aren’t better than those around us. We’ve simply accepted a gift that’s been freely given. Our motivation should be to share this message with as many as we can who are still slaves to sin.**

The Last Word

- **Goal:** The idea is for students to consider the ways God’s grace has transformed their characters.
- **Set-Up:** A dry-erase board will be helpful to make a list. Also, provide ways for students to record their thoughts in a way they can take it with them after your group time. The easiest way would be to encourage them to type it on a note app on their phone. But, if this would create difficulties, provide note cards, or cardstock, or something similar, and a pen to write with.

We’ve talked about the effects of God’s grace expressed through Christ in more of a big picture sense. But if we submitted our lives to Christ through faith, we’ve experienced the transforming nature of God’s grace, just like Paul talked about in Titus.

- **The odd thing is that we don’t often stop to think about who we’d be apart from Christ, or just how He’s transformed our characters. As we wrap up this lesson, let’s carve out a few moments to simply think about the difference God’s grace in Christ has made in our lives.**

Write down some thoughts to take with you when you leave. Think about how God’s grace has come into their life and changed their characters. Think about this in terms of these areas

- **The things I care about**

- **The things I think about**
 - **How I treat others**
 - **How I think about my future**
 - **The words I say**
 - **How I look at my life**
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- **Think about God’s grace and how it has changed you in regards to these categories. Then, choose two or three of them and try and write a one sentence statement of how God’s grace through Christ has changed what you care about, or what you think about, and so on.**

Embrace the new life God made possible through Christ, a new life motivated by God’s grace.

Close in prayer.

- Don’t forget to distribute the “Grace: Lesson 2” devotions to your students. If you’re printing them, have them available for students as you wrap up class. If you’re texting a link, posting them on Facebook, or some other means of electronic distribution, make sure you inform students of when they will be receiving them.
- Consider texting students a couple of times during the week to encourage them to follow through with reading the devotions.