

Titus 3:3-8

Group Guide | December 28

Open your group time with a few Advent questions (10 minutes)

Thus far we have discussed how Advent is a season of waiting, longing, and slowing down, how it can feel, however, busy, chaotic, like it's lacking any sort of peace, and that life can feel despairing. Last week, we acknowledged that often times in life we feel unloved and unloveable and that sometimes we are indifferent to the hurts and pains of others.

On Sunday, however, we lit the candle of that represents **Christ** which highlights that true hope, joy, peace, and love are found solely in Him!

- How can you remember that Jesus is where hope, peace, joy, and love are found this Christmas season?
- Where are you needing the hope or joy or peace or love of Christ right now?

As a group, seek Christ. Pray that the Spirit of Christ will make Jesus more beautiful than ever to you this season.

Read Scripture (15 minutes)

Read **Titus 3:3-8**.

- What are all of the ways (list them out) that Paul describes how “we” once were apart from Christ in verse 3?
- What specific attributes of God are mentioned in verse 4, and how do they relate to the action described?
- According to verse 5, why were we saved? What is explicitly not the reason, and what is the basis instead?
- What should be the fruit of our salvation according to verse 8?
- Are there any words or phrases or concepts you are unfamiliar with? What?

Reflect on the sermon (30 minutes)

- What stood out, resonated, or challenged you from Emerson's sermon?
- In what ways do you or have you personally felt the *need* for salvation?
- When you honestly reflect on your life before Christ (or seasons of wandering), which descriptions in verse 3—foolish, disobedient, led astray, enslaved to passions, malice, envy, hating and being hated—resonate most deeply with you? Why do you think that is?
- Read the following paragraph of places where Emerson mentioned people often look for a sort of “salvation”:

“Salvation is not found in any other religion. Salvation isn’t found in Islam, or Sikhism or Buddhism or Hinduism. It means that salvation isn’t found by looking inward and getting in touch with your “true self.” Salvation isn’t found in good deeds (even religious ones!), salvation isn’t found in “being a good person” (there are no good people compared to a holy God!). It’s not found in self-reliance, through remixing or repackaging different practices from this or that religion/spirituality, or through constant scrolling. It’s not found in the attention you give to the NFL. It’s not in this health program, or that influencer, or that eastern wisdom. It’s not found in A.I. or in transhumanism. It won’t be found in ascetic or mystical practices or stoic philosophy. It’s not in crystals or meditation or astrology, in witchcraft or Wicca, in ayahuasca trips or any other psychedelic. You won’t find salvation in Crypto or the stock market, in gaming or virtual reality, in trad aesthetics, in sexual deviance, in biohacking, or in botox injections. It’s not in therapy, in politics, in aspartame or Red Dye 42...”

Which of these places are most common for people to look for salvation outside of Christ in our culture today? Which of these are places you think you may be tempted to go to for salvation? If none of these resonate, what would you add for you personally?

- Being “justified by his grace” means we are declared righteous and adopted as heirs with the hope of eternal life (v. 7). How does this identity as an heir of God affect your sense of security, purpose, and daily decision-making?
- Verse 8 talks about how good works should be the fruit of our salvation in Christ. What good works or “putting in order” are you needing to do as you enter into 2026?

Finish with prayer (10 minutes)

Pray for one another and for your community:

- Ask the Holy Spirit to continue His renewing work in areas where you still feel stuck in old patterns. (Pause briefly for silent prayer)
- Pray that remembering your past would make you gentle, patient, and compassionate toward those who are still lost in the ways described in verse 3. (Invite 1–2 people to pray aloud if comfortable, or pause for silent prayer)
- Ask God to show you practical ways this week to “devote ourselves to good works” that are excellent and profitable for people around you—at home, work, church, or in our neighborhood. (Invite 1–2 people to pray aloud, or pause for silent prayer)
- Finally, pray for any in your group or those you all know who have not yet experienced this saving mercy, that the goodness and loving kindness of God our Savior would appear to them.