

MAINTAINING GOOD CHRISTIAN WORKS

PLEASE do not read these comments until you have prayed and read the Bible for this lesson to learn what the Holy Spirit wants you to teach your students. Then let Him guide you in using these notes. When you follow this procedure you will be a better teacher of your students.

Lesson Aim: Challenge the believers to "be careful to maintain good works" which will glorify God.

Suggestion: Have the students read the Scriptures and answer the questions in the student lesson. Insert questions that fit your lesson aim for class discussion. Use the ones below where appropriate.

Introduction: The lesson in Titus 1 revealed that God has planned for His churches to maintain order by doing good works. This cannot be done apart from the believers who are the church. God wants His people to be characterized by good works. They are not saved by good works (3:5), but they are saved to do good works as it says in Tit 3:8, "They that believe in God might be careful to maintain good works. These things are good and profitable unto men" (Tit 3:8).

How should a good leader train God's people to produce good works? 2:1-10

Paul gave instructions to Titus on how he should teach the aged men to live godly lives (2:2) and how the aged women should live (2:3) so that they could teach the young women to live godly lives in their homes (2:4-5) and how the young men should live sober lives, not intoxicated with the wild lifestyle of the world (2:6). He also was to instruct the Christian slaves how they were to treat their masters (2:9-10). He was to teach the good works of the Christian life by sound doctrine and by example (2:1, 7-8).

What grace has God given us to produce good works? 2:11

The grace of God that brings salvation enables us to produce good works. We are not saved by good works, but we are saved to produce and maintain good works (Tit 3:5, 8, 14; Eph 2:8-10). Salvation is the basis for good works that pleases God. However, can an unsaved person produce works that God desires? Yes. They are the works of repentance. Sinners are commanded to "seek the Lord while He may be found, call upon Him while He is near: let the wicked forsake his way and the unrighteous man his thoughts" (Isa 55:6-7). A sinner cannot be saved until he produces the works of repentance. John the Baptist commanded the people: "Bring forth therefore fruits worthy of repentance" (Lk 3:8). Cornelius did some works of repentance and God directed him to find Peter who would tell him how to be saved (Acts 10:1-8, 30-33; 11:11-14). Cornelius' works showed he was seeking God and it led him to salvation. Paul praised the believers at Thessalonica that they "turned to God from idols"; It was their work of repentance that brought them to Jesus Christ for salvation so they could "serve the living and true God" (1 Thess 1:9). The works of repentance do not save them, but they prepare them to put their faith in Jesus Christ for salvation. Jesus Christ is the "grace and truth" that brings salvation to lost sinners (Jn 1:14). He said, no one "comes to the Father but by Me" (Jn 14:6). God's grace is made known to unsaved people by the preaching of His Word, so that they might hear what He has done for them through His Son, believe it and call on His name to be saved (Rom 10:13-15). Those who call on the Lord are redeemed from all lawless deeds and are purified to be His special possession. These should be "zealous of good works" (Tit 2:14).

What does the grace of God teach believers? 2:12-13

The grace of God teaches believers by instruction, exhortation, rebuke and even by chastening. It is more than telling a person how to do it; it is training a person to do it. The grace of God teaches us how we ought not to live. we ought to deny ungodliness, any decision or act that opposes God's will, and deny worldliness, any act that fulfills the desires of the flesh. The grace of God also teaches us how to live. We ought to live soberly with a sound, clear mind to make good spiritual decisions; to live righteously by being fair and honest with people; and to live godly by making Christ our example (1 Pet 2:21). Grace teaches us to look for "the blessed hope and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Savior Jesus Christ" (2:13). Everyone that has the hope of Jesus Christ's return dwelling in him "purifies himself, even as He is pure" (1 Jn 3:3).