

Instructions for Home Group Leaders

Included in this lesson plan are notes and resources for you. The questions listed are to be used as a help to guide and encourage your group conversation. You are free to improvise through the questions as the conversation takes you. Do your best to involve everyone in the discussion as some may dominate conversation and others may hide.

Your main role as a Home Group leader is to build community and make disciples, not to teach. Teaching will be a natural element of discussion, but allow the questions to move your members toward understanding the concept of the passage and message.

Remember to review your resources for leading a discussion. Those techniques will help you to build a involved and caring atmosphere as well as challenge you as you serve and lead your group.

Attached is an outline of the study for the trimester. Listed first is a set of passages for you to read before your first meeting. Studying these passages will help you to know the context of the passage and prepare you to respond to questions.

Your outline will show you the passage for the week and the themes to be discussed. Be sure the review the passage and questions before each meeting.

Your lesson each week is only expected to last 30-40 minutes. These study discussions should be only one element of your home group community. Make sure to also allow time for laughter, history telling (getting to know each other), prayer, service, etc.

After the outline, you'll find your weekly breakdown of passages and questions. Each lesson will list the passages to read for that meeting as well as a list of questions to ask the group. For your convenience, the questions will be marked as what type of question they are. Each type of question serves a unique purpose.

Observation Questions: Helps the group discover context, people, actions that are literally taking place in the passage. Helps the group set a foundation to discuss the themes. These questions are great for involving individuals who are typically quite or cautious about sharing.

Interpretation Questions: Helps the group discover what is meant by the writer. Understanding what the writer was saying to his audience is an invaluable element of understanding the message being given. It cannot mean something to us today that it did not mean to the audience it was written to. It can however be applied uniquely to each reader. (See Application Questions)

Application Questions: Helps the group make the passage being discussed personally relevant to current circumstances. These questions move the read beyond knowledge to a place where they can let the Holy Spirit transform their life.

Each question is abbreviated as: Obs., Int., or App.

TCOC Home Groups

Trimester Outline: Paul's Letter to Titus

Note for Group Facilitator: Before beginning the trimester, you should read the book of Titus (chapters 1-3), as well as Galatians chapter 2, and 2 Corinthians chapters 7-8, making personal notes with questions or comments you might have on the passages. This will give you some better context.

Lesson 1: Galatians 2:1-3, 2 Corinthians 8:22-24, Titus 1:1-4

- Background of Titus
- Relationship between Paul and Titus
- Theme of Discipleship

Lesson 2: Titus 1:5-9

- Character of an elder
- Elder's role in discipleship

Lesson 3: Titus 1:10-14

- Recognizing and responding to destructive talk

Lesson 4: Titus 1:15-16

- Purity and Impurity

Lesson 5: Titus 2:1-5

- Roles of older men and women in discipleship

Lesson 6: Titus 2:6-8

- Roles of younger men and women - "They have nothing bad to say about us"

Lesson 7: Titus 2:9-10

- Subject to authority and humility

Lesson 8: Titus 2:11-14

- Living in the Kingdom of God

Lesson 9: Titus 2:15 - 3:1-2

- Counter-Cultural Life of a believer

Lesson 10: Titus 3:3-8

- Saved through God's Mercy

Lesson 11: Titus 3:9-15

- Finding focus and remaining productive in the Lord's Kingdom.

Facilitator's Notes: Lesson 1

Objective: Discover background context on Titus, who he is, what his job is, etc. Discover the relationship between Paul and Titus, and to explain the theme of discipleship.

Lesson 1: Galatians 2:1-3, 2 Corinthians 8:22-24, Titus 1:1-4

Basic context of Titus: The book of Titus was written by the apostle Paul to his disciple, a man named Titus. Titus is not mentioned in the book of Acts in recounting the history of the early church, but he is mentioned on several occasions by Paul in other letters. Further context will be learned in group discussion.

Read Galatians 2:1-3 (Paul writing to the church in the region of Galatia)

Observation Question: Based on Paul's story in this passage, what details do you notice about Titus?

Interpretation Question: How do you think it might have been different to be a Gentile Christian leader instead of a Jewish Christian Leader?

Read 2 Corinthians 8:22-24 (Paul writing to the church in Corinth)

Int: Why do you think it was important for Paul to vouch for Titus in this letter?

Int: What does it say about Titus, that Paul is sending him to Corinth as an instructor?

Application Question: What instance do you recall when someone has honored you in front of others? Why was that important to you?

Read Titus 1:1-4

Obs: What title does Paul give to Titus in this passage?

Int: How would you describe Titus' relationship with Paul based of what you have read so far?

Int: What qualities come to your mind when you think of the phrase "true son in the faith"?

App: If you were in Titus' place, pastoring a church in Crete, what would be the most useful thing that you want to know from Paul?

App: Who in your life has mentored you in your faith and how has that impacted your knowledge and relationship with God?

App: What qualities do you see in the relationship between Titus and Paul that are different from common relationships in our culture?

Close as you feel what is relevant.

Facilitator's Notes: Lesson 2

Objective: to discuss the characteristics of an elder in the church and to discover an elder's role in the process of discipleship.

Lesson 2: Titus 1:5-9

Review last week's discussion

Read Titus 1:5-9

Obs: Based on this passage, what is Titus' responsibility to the church in Crete?

Obs: After reading these qualities of an elder, what types of roles and responsibilities might these new elders have at the church in Crete?

App: What positions or roles would fit these descriptions in our church community?

Int: Why are elders necessary for this church when Titus has been given full authority to lead?

Int: What do you think Paul means when he says "blameless life" in verses 6 and 7?

App: What other qualities do you think "blameless life" would include in our culture and time that was not relevant to this first century church?

Int: Why is a person's family reputation an important quality to observe when selecting a leader?

Int: Why do you think hospitality was an important value in this culture? (verse 8)

App: Which of these listed, do you think is the most challenging qualification for an elder?

App: What qualities in a leader (listed or not listed) do you find most attractive to follow?

App: If you were appoint leadership in today's church, what quality do you think would be important considering our culture and challenges?

App: What do you think you can do to help build strong leadership (not pastoral staff) in our church?

Facilitator's Notes: Lesson 3

Objective: to discover how to recognize and discover destructive and dishonoring talk; how to build up and honor one another.

Lesson 3: Titus 1:10-14

Review last week's discussion

Read Titus 1:10-14

Obs: Who is engaging in the useless talk that Paul describes?

Obs: What destructive ideas does Paul address in this passage?

Int: Why do you think it's dangerous for this church in Crete to hear these types of ideas?

Int: Why is circumcision for salvation considered deceptive talk?

Int: When you think of a man or women who is "strong in the faith" (v13) what qualities come to mind?

Int: What do you think Paul means when he uses the word 'truth' in verses 11, and 14.

App: What opportunities have you had to share "truth" with Christian believers who are young in their faith?

Int: How does someone turn a whole family away from the truth? (v11)

App: If a whole family can be turned away from truth, how do you suppose a family could be turned toward truth?

App: What might be an appropriate way to "reprimand sternly" someone who is speaking destructively?

App: What can you do to help encourage other believers as they search to know the truth from the lies?

Facilitator's Notes: Lesson 4

Objective: to discuss qualities of a pure and impure heart and to discover how our behavior is reflective of knowing God.

Lesson 4: Titus 1:15-16

Review last week's discussion

Read Titus 1:15-16

Obs: In this passage, Paul talks about purity. How do you define purity? (consider spiritual and physical definitions)

Obs: What distinction does Paul make about the purity of things vs. the purity of people?

Int: What does it mean to have a pure heart? (v15)

Obs: How have these people mentioned in this passage disqualified their claim of knowing God?

Int: Why do you think Paul finds it so important for a claim to be reinforced with action?

App: Why would it be important that we live out the claims we state about God?

Int: What does it mean to "know God"? (v 16)

App: How has knowing God brought change to the way you live your life?

Int: How do you suppose that purity (v15) and knowing God (v16) relate to each other?

App: What is something about God that you would like to know more about?

App: What are some ways that you can encourage people in your life to seek to know more about God?

Facilitator's Notes: Lesson 5

Objective: Discover the value of older men and women in our church community. Discuss challenges that our culture encounters with the value of elders.

Lesson 5: Titus 2:1-5

Review last week's discussion

Read Titus 2:1-5

Obs: In verse 1, what is the new responsibility that Paul is giving to Titus?

Int: What do you think might be a good way for Titus to teach the older men and women? (v2)

Obs: Based on the qualities that Paul talks about, what do you gather might be the weaknesses of the older men and women in Crete?

Int: Why do you think it's valuable for a church to have older believers?

App: How would you describe our culture's current value of older men and women within the church?

App: What qualities have you seen in an older man or woman that has challenged or encouraged you in your relationship with God?

Int: How does a man of God become worthy of respect? (v2)

Int: Supposing that Titus is successful in teaching these qualities to the older men and women, how might the church in Crete be affected?

App: What do you think is the greatest challenge for older men and women of the faith in our church?

App: In verse 4, Paul instructs that the older women must train the younger women. How might this concept look in our culture and community?

Facilitator's Notes: Lesson 6

Objective: Discuss the challenges that younger believers encounter and talk about why living as an example is practically valuable to younger believers.

Lesson 6: Titus 2:6-8

Review last week's discussion

Read Titus 2:6-8

Obs: Based on what we've read so far, what might be some criticisms that Titus might be encountering?

Obs: What are Paul's personal instructions to Titus in verse 7?

Int: Why do you think Titus is given the instructions to be an example to the young men rather than the old?

Int: What challenges might the young believers in Crete encounter in following Titus' leadership?

Int: Why do you think Paul emphasizes *actions* so much in regard to teaching others how to live?

App: What would you like your actions to say about what you believe?

App: What kind of opposition have you encountered in your commitment to Christ?

Int: Consider this quote: "We often judge others by their actions, and judge ourselves by our intentions." How is Titus faced with this challenge?

App: What value have you found in following the example of another believer?

App: What kinds of challenges do you think that young believers encounter in our culture and community?

App: Considering your personal season of life, in what way would you like to be an example to young believers and others who don't believe?

Facilitator's Notes: Lesson 7

Objective: Talk about obedience and slavery in the context of its audience. Discover the value behind honoring authority and that your obedience brings credibility to Christ.

Lesson 7: Titus 2:9-10

Review last week's discussion

Read Titus 2:9-10

Obs: What do you think when you hear the word "slave" or "servant"?

Obs: What do suppose it meant for someone to be a slave in Crete during this time?

Obs: What do you think when you hear the word "obey"?

Int: In what ways do you think the word obedience is defined in our culture as opposed to this culture in Crete; other cultures around the world?

Int: Why do you think Paul is appealing to *slaves* about their responsibility in representing God?

App: How would you apply this teaching to slaves in today's culture?

Int: To whom are these slaves making the teaching about God attractive? (v10)

Int: If the behaviors that Paul describe make the gospel attractive, then what kind of behavior do you think this culture in Crete is used to seeing from slaves?

App: Who would you consider to be in the position of master or authority in your life?

Int: How does obedience to an earthly master endorse teaching about God? (v10)

App: What are some good ideas of how to honor "masters" or authorities in our community and church?

App: In what ways could you make the gospel attractive though your obedience?

Facilitator's Notes: Lesson 8

Objective: Discover what grace is and how it is misunderstood in our culture. How to understand and communicate grace to a world that values work and consequences.

Lesson 8: Titus 2:11-14

Review last week's discussion

Read Titus 2:11-14

Obs: Why do you suppose Paul follows up a passage about the behavior of slaves with his statement in verse 11?

Int: Why do you suppose it is relevant to Titus that Paul emphasizes that salvation is for all people?

App: Why is the open invitation of salvation an relevant to our culture?

Obs: From this passage, for what purposes does Paul say that Christ gave his life?

Int: Why do you think Paul finds it important to instruct Titus about Christ's purpose for giving his life?

App: How do these purposes (V 14) challenge your perspective of God's purpose for your life?

Int: If Paul considers the world evil (v 12) then why is it so common to hear it said that "people are basically good"?

Int: Paul says that we live in an evil world (v12) and that we should be committed to doing good deeds (v14). How does one measure what is "good" and what is "evil"?

App: How would you respond to someone who said that "good" and "evil" were only relative terms?

App: How would you explain "the grace of God" to someone who did not understand?

Facilitator's Notes: Lesson 9

Objective: Discovering what it means to have Godly culture. Discuss what is different about the values of God's kingdom as opposed to common cultural values.

Lesson 9: Titus 2:15-3:1-2

Review last week's discussion

Read Titus 2:15 - 3:1-2

Obs: Why would the church in Crete object to Titus' teaching and instructions?

Obs: Why is important for the church that Paul reinforce Titus' authority?

App: What do you think is a healthy way of responding to newly appointed leadership?

Int: Why do you think the believers need to be reminded of these things? (v1)

Int: How might these qualities of behavior be different from the behavior of the existing culture in Crete?

App: What characteristics come to mind when you think of a Godly culture?

Int: How is submitting to government and officials a quality of a Godly believer?

Int: How does living counter-culturally bring value to the message of Christ?

Int: What do these instructions say about God's character? (v1-2)

App: What differences come to mind between American values and Godly values?

App: How would you like to help to establish a Godly culture in our church community?

Facilitator's Notes: Lesson 10

Objective: Salvation requires God's mercy, not our hard work. Discuss the need for repentance of evil living and our desperate need for God's mercy. Discuss how we are all evil and all deserve death without grace.

Lesson 10: Titus 3:3-8

Review last week's discussion

Read Titus 3:3-8

Obs: What do you know about Paul's history based on this passage?

Int: Why do you think Paul is so transparent with how he feels about his past as he writes this letter?

App: What value have you found in highlighting your own past failures?

Obs: What does Paul write about in regard to our personal righteous acts? (v5)

Int: How would you define the word love as it is used in verse 4?

App: What is an example of a real life situation where you would have to show love and kindness even though it is not deserved?

Int: Why do you think "having confidence in our inheritance of eternal life" is important for a believer? (v7)

App: How would you explain to someone how they can receive God's grace?

App: How would you respond to someone who said they were unsure of their salvation?

Int: What do you think Paul means when he says that God gives us a new birth?

App: In what way has you received "new life" by knowing God's grace?

Facilitator's Notes: Lesson 11

Objective: Talk about how to respond to distractions and discuss the value of finding focus and remaining productive in the Lord's Kingdom.

Lesson 10: Titus 3:9-15

Review last week's discussion

Read Titus 3:9-15

Obs: From this passage, what does Paul have to say about Jewish laws and genealogies?

Obs: Based on what you've read in Paul's letter to Titus, why do you think Paul has this opinion about Jewish laws and genealogies?

Int: Why is it important for Titus to not get involved in these discussions? (v9)

App: How do you know what discussions are foolish and what discussions are useful?

App: If you wanted to be intentional about building up someone in our church community, what would you say to them?

Int: Why do you suppose that Paul gives Titus instructions on dealing with people who are causing division?

Int: How might people who cause division distract Titus from fulfilling his responsibilities?

App: What is a healthy way to respond when you sense that someone you know is causing division?

Int: Why do you think Paul highlights urgency in this part of his letter to Titus? (v9,14)

Int: In verse 14, Paul instructs in his letter for to remain productive. What does it mean for a believer to be productive?

App: What do you think are some good ways that you can help build unity in our church community?