

"God Never Said That"

"It Doesn't Matter What You Do"

warm-up

Group Ice Breaker: Share a time when someone spoke kindly and encouraged you.

- How did this make you feel?
- What actions were the fruit of these emotions?

word & application

Read Titus 3:1-9 (NLT)

Remind the believers to submit to the government and its officers. They should be obedient, **always ready to do what is good**. They **must not slander anyone** and **must avoid quarreling**. Instead, they should be **gentle and show true humility to everyone**. Once we, too, were foolish and disobedient. We were misled and became slaves to many lusts and pleasures. Our lives were full of evil and envy, and we hated each other. But—When **God our Savior revealed his kindness and love**, he saved us, not because of the righteous things we had done, but because of his mercy. **He washed away our sins, giving us a new birth and new life through the Holy Spirit**. He generously poured out the Spirit upon us through Jesus Christ our Savior. **Because of his grace he declared us righteous and gave us confidence that we will inherit eternal life**. This is a trustworthy saying, and **I want you to insist on these teachings** so that all who trust in God will devote themselves to doing good.

Noteworthy:

The highlighted portion above, "He washed away our sins, giving us a new birth and new life through the Holy Spirit" actually translates to an idea of complete restoration to our pristine and perfect condition that existed before the "fall" of Adam and Eve. (Greek word: paligenesia)

What has restored us to this condition? (Answer: God revealing his kindness and love through our Savior.)

Discussion & Application:

Consider these two views on a "Pathway to Righteousness":

- 1) **Our Good Works → Our Righteousness → God's Acceptance**
- 2) **God's Kindness → Our Restoration → Our Good Works**

If we are completely honest and transparent, which model above best describes how we usually live out our faith – how we view God and how we evaluate others? What "root" beliefs drive these behaviors in us?

How would our lives be different if we truly chose to accept that God now embraces us in the same relationship He originally designed with Adam and Eve (Genesis 1:27-28)? What if we believed that our purpose is to simply accept this and adopt this same view of others around us? How would this affect our daily interactions? What could be the results of this?

prayer

Pray over group requests. Also, pray that the Holy Spirit continues to renew our minds and hearts to truly and wholly accept the restored identities that God has provided us through Jesus Christ. Pray that as we accept this, God's kindness and love resonates through our actions to the world around us.