

God's Glory Will Appear
Titus 2:13-14
ABC 2/14/21

The grace of God & the glory of God both teach us to say no to ungodliness & worldly desires & instead to live in a sensible, righteous, & godly way. We're called to live this way **in the present age**, right now, today. God's grace not only saves; it also transforms & teaches us how to live. In Titus 2:11-14 we find that we live between 2 appearances. In vs 11 Paul tells us **the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all people**. Then vs 13 says, **Looking for the blessed hope & the appearing of the glory of our great God & Savior, Christ Jesus**. We live in the age that's between 2 appearances of Jesus. We're surrounded, behind & before, with the appearances of Jesus. Behind us is the Son of God bringing grace. Before us is the great God our Savior coming in glory. We're between 2 worlds, in between His grace & His glory. Last week we saw that God's grace appeared with the 1st advent of Jesus & we looked at the words *grace & repentance*. Today we'll see that God's glory will appear & we'll see 2 more words to summarize this passage: *Christ & His Cross*. 1st grace, then glory & they're inseparably linked. The One who will come in glory is the One who has come in grace. **11-14**

When God's grace appeared 2,000 years ago, it appeared as a Man who died to redeem us from sin & make us passionate for good deeds. This was the purpose of the appearance of God's grace in Jesus. The aim of that grace is described in vs 12 as **instructing us to deny ungodliness & worldly desires & to live sensibly, righteously, & in a godly manner in the present age**. That's the same as saying that Christ came to purify us & make us zealous for good deed, as we see in vs 14. Vss 12 & 14 are like bookends around vs 13. Both describe the purpose of God's grace as it appeared in Christ's 1st coming. The *book* in the middle of the bookends is our **blessed hope** (13). What God's grace has begun in us through Jesus' 1st coming, His glory will complete in us through His 2nd coming. Our incentive & power to live a life pleasing to God comes from 2 directions: It comes from looking back with gratitude to the grace of God that appeared in Jesus at His 1st coming when He purchased our redemption; & it comes from looking forward with **hope** to the glory of God that will appear at His return when He completes our redemption. Heb 9:27-28 describes the connection

between the past & future work of Christ clearly. **Just as it is destined for people to die once, & after this *comes* judgment, so Christ also, having been offered once to bear the sins of many, will appear a second time for salvation without *reference to sin*, to those who eagerly await Him.** This clearly says the saving work of Christ began with His 1st advent when He bore our sin in His body on the cross & will be completed at His return when He saves us from the final wrath of God & gives us rest in His kingdom. Strip away His 2nd coming & salvation is torn in half (1 Thes 1:10; Rom 5:9–10) & half a salvation is no salvation. Last week we looked at *grace* & *repentance*. Our 3rd word summarizing these vss is...

3. Christ Vs 12 ends with this **present age** which refers to the age between the 1st appearing of Christ & His yet future appearing. Grace in Jesus 1st appeared in the past, a grace which impacts us in the present through a life of continual repentance & sanctification (12). Now it's a future-oriented hope in Christ that vs 13 speaks of. **13**

Paul says grace teaches us to live so as to honor God **in the present age**, while we look for the **blessed hope**, the appearing of **the glory of our great God & Savior, Christ Jesus** (12-13). The mention of **this present age** presupposes a future age for which the Christian hopes with assurance & perseverance. This future age, characterized by eternal life (1:2), has been initiated in the work of Christ during His incarnation. At His 2nd coming the future age will be fully realized by every Christian.¹ But we aren't allowed to say in this age of grace there are no standards for us to follow. Godliness remains our obligation until we see Jesus face-to-face & become like Him. As Titus, & those entrusted to his care, lay hold of grace to live self-controlled, upright, & godly lives right now (12), they look & wait for the **blessed hope** (13). **Looking** or **waiting** can sound like idleness or nonchalance, but the underlying word means to look forward to with a receptive frame of mind (Lk 2:25, 38).² This isn't a posture or attitude of passivity in light of an uncertain future. This is a sure confidence in God & His promises. It's not only longing & waiting for but also of eager & certain expectation. The return of Jesus is something we're to look for, look forward to, & long for. As 2

¹ Thomas D. Lea & Hayne P. Griffin, [1, 2 Timothy, Titus](#), vol. 34, The New American Commentary, p 311

² Danker, *Concise Greek-English Lexicon*, 302

Tim 4:8 says we must love His appearing. This is the **blessed hope** believers have. Biblical **hope** is a confident certainty. It's not finger-crossing or wishing. No, it's a confident expectation of good things to come. Hebrews calls it **the full assurance of hope** (6:11). It's a **blessed** or happy **hope** because it isn't a human **hope** but a divinely promised certainty.³ This is a waiting that's proactive, alert, & expectant. Why? Because this coming appearing is the unveiling of Christ in all His glory (Mt 16:27; 24:30; 25:31; Mk 8:38; 13:26; Lk 9:26; 21:27). This is when He'll appear in glory & power rather than in humility & submission as in His 1st advent. Whereas His 1st appearance was marked by grace (11), His 2nd appearance will be marked by glory. As believers, we eagerly look forward to this because then **the Lord of glory** (1 Cor 2:8) Himself is finally & openly glorified before all mankind. This isn't merely the appearance of the invisible transcendent deity, who **dwells in unapproachable light, whom no one has seen or can see** (1 Tim 6:16). Nor is it simply Jesus resurrected showing up like He did in the weeks following His death. Instead, it's the finish of the eternal plan of the Triune God. Satan & sin will be judged & God's kingdom & His people will be vindicated & exalted (2 Thes 2:5–12). Believers will see the Lord in whom they've trusted as He is & be made like Him (1 Jn 3:2). All the hardships & sufferings experienced in this **present age** will be forgotten in the magnificence of what that day will reveal.⁴ **Glory**, like **grace** (11), **kindness & love** (3:4), isn't simply a description of Christ but a personification. In His incarnation, Jesus was grace personified. Want to see God's grace? Look to Jesus & all He is & has done. In His next **appearing**, He'll be **glory** personified. He will be the blazing Shekinah glory that Peter, James, & John saw partially revealed at Jesus' transfiguration (Mt 17:1–8).⁵

The gospel is simple, but deeply profound. Simple words: *Grace, Repentance, Christ & Cross*. But not everyone has an accurate understanding of these words. So how do we define **Christ**? The end of vs 13 gives us one of the most concise statements on His deity & nature when it says, **our great God & Savior Christ Jesus**. Paul is equating the **great God** with the **Savior Christ Jesus**. To put it another way, **our great God is our Savior Christ Jesus**. Not only is Jesus the **Christ**, the Anointed One,

³ John F. MacArthur Jr., [Titus](#), MacArthur New Testament Commentary, p 119

⁴ Robert W. Yarbrough, [The Letters to Timothy & Titus](#), ed. D. A. Carson, Pillar New Testament Commentary, p 530

⁵ John F. MacArthur Jr., [Titus](#), MacArthur New Testament Commentary, p 120

who came to fulfill all the past promises as our Messiah & to provide present grace as the Lamb of God, but as our **great God** He's also able to deliver the blessings of future grace for which all believers eagerly hope. He is our **great God**, the object of our worship. He is **Savior**, Deliverer, Redeemer, & Rescuer. He is Jesus the Christ, God's Messiah, fully God & fully man (Col 2:9), the One who came in fulfillment of OT promises & the One who's coming again. With a constant gaze & the experience of grace, our eyes can be fixed upward, waiting with the **hope** of His coming. Is 43:10-11 makes it clear there's no Savior apart from YHWH the LORD.

"You are My witnesses," declares the LORD, "& My servant whom I have chosen, So that you may know & believe Me & understand that I am He. Before Me there was no God formed, & there will be none after Me. I, even I, am the Lord, & there is no savior besides Me."

If there's no Savior besides YHWH / Jehovah / LORD, & Titus 2:13 calls Christ our **Savior**, then Jesus is the one & only LORD. & we're to be eagerly looking for His appearing. The early church father Chrysostom exclaims: *For nothing is more blessed & more desirable than that appearing. Words are not able to represent it, the blessings thereof surpass our understanding,* & on that note he puts his pen down.⁶

The attitude of the **Savior** toward those He came to save is that we are precious to Him despite the sin that required such sacrifice from Him. These words breathe the grace that characterizes our God & should inspire us to do the good works that please our Savior. The people that are God's own by virtue of His unconditional favor & sacrifice are to be **eager for good deeds**, as we'll see in vs 14. Here again is the theme that grace leads to godliness. Because Christ's work alone purchases our salvation through the redeeming price of His blood alone, & because Christ's work alone purifies us through the cleansing that His blood supplies, we don't look to our works as the basis of acceptance with God. Doing what God requires doesn't make us His own, but having been made His own by no work of ours, we now love to love Him who 1st loved us (1 Jn 4:19). Such love has profound effects upon our attitudes & actions.⁷ Paul is focusing here on the culmination of our salvation, which will be perfected & completed when our Lord calls us up to the home He's

⁶ Homily 5, Nicene & Post-Nicene Fathers, 13:537

⁷ R. Kent Hughes & Bryan Chapell, [1 & 2 Timothy & Titus: To Guard the Deposit](#), Preaching the Word, p 349

prepared for us (Jn 14:1–3), when **we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet; for the trumpet will sound, & the dead will be raised imperishable, & we shall be changed. For this perishable must put on the imperishable, & this mortal must put on immortality** (1 Cor 15:51–53; Mt 24:30–31; 25:31).⁸ Do you live in light of the Lord’s return? Do you eagerly await His coming again? Not, do you believe in the doctrine of His return but are you eagerly awaiting Him? This is a crucial test of the genuineness of your faith. Peter said, **To you who believe He is precious** (1 Pt 2:7 KJV). The preciousness of Jesus to you is evidence of your faith. & the anticipation of His coming is the evidence of His preciousness. You can test the reality of your faith by whether you’re eagerly waiting for His return. Not that you have to think about it all the time. Even when you’re in love, you don’t think about your sweetheart all the time. Rather, ask yourself these questions:

1. Does my mind return frequently to the truth of Christ’s appearing?
2. When my mind turns to the truth of His return, is my heart eager for it?
3. Do you pray for His coming? **Maranatha**, praised the early church (1 Cor 16:22), come, Lord Jesus!⁹

This brings us to the 4th & final key word:

4. The Cross Paul designs every phrase of vs 14 to display the wonder of Christ, His work, & the resulting status of His people. In vs 13, Paul focused on Christ’s 2nd appearance (2 Tim 4:1, 8), but here in vs 14 he again turns to His 1st appearance. As in vs 12, Paul again emphasizes sanctification with its rejection of vice & its reception of virtue. **14**

The **who** of vs 14 is **our great God & Savior, Jesus Christ** of vs 13. He acted as **Savior** in many ways: by His identity as the eternal Son of God, by His incarnation, by His miracles, by His teaching, by His founding of a kingdom, by His resurrection, but especially in that He **gave Himself**.¹⁰ **Gave** portrays Christ’s death as a ritual offering made specifically to atone for sins (Rom 4:25; 8:32; Gal 1:4).¹¹ This also reminds us that His sacrificial death was a gift we neither earned nor deserved.

⁸ John F. MacArthur Jr., *Titus*, MacArthur New Testament Commentary (Chicago: Moody Press, 1996), 120.

⁹ John Piper, *Our Hope: The Appearing of Jesus Christ*, www.desiringgod.org/messages/our-hope-the-appearing-of-jesus-christ

¹⁰ Robert W. Yarbrough, *The Letters to Timothy & Titus*, ed. D. A. Carson, Pillar New Testament Commentary, pp 530–531

¹¹ Philip Towner, *1–2 Timothy & Titus*, vol. 14, The IVP New Testament Commentary Series, Tt 2:12

The Christ, whose glorious 2nd appearing we eagerly await, is the Christ **who gave Himself for us to redeem us from every lawless deed** at His 1st advent. Where was it that He **gave Himself for us**? He gave Himself for us on the cross (Jn 6:51; Gal 1:4; 2:20; Eph 5:2, 25; 1 Tim 2:6; 1 Jn 3:16). There He died in our place. His death was substitutionary & vicarious, it was **for us** (Is 53:5-6; Rom 5:8; 1 Cor 15:3; 2 Cor 5:14-15; Gal 1:4; 3:13; Eph 5:2, 25; 1 Thes 5:10; 1 Pt 2:24; 3:18). Christ's death wasn't pointless or without purpose. He died in order to redeem believers from sin (Ps 130:8; Gal 1:4). God & God alone is the **Savior**. God & God alone can **redeem** sinners. & God & God alone can purify His people. Only God the Son could fulfill the perfect requirement of God the Father. As we've seen, we're saved from God by God through God & for God. In other words, we're saved from His wrath by His grace through His Son for His glory. As you know, the doctrine of salvation is seen in 3 tenses: Past—we're delivered from sin's penalty which is justification. Present—we're delivered from sin's power which is sanctification. Future—we'll be delivered from sin's presence which is glorification. All of this finds its effectiveness in the perfect atoning work of Jesus on the cross, a work that's put on marvelous display here. It can't be said that His death was an accident that took Him by surprise. No, His death had to occur. It was an intrinsic part of God's eternal plan of salvation (Acts 2:23). Christ's redemptive death & resurrection is without question the ultimate illustration of God's grace. The act originated in God's plan, was executed on behalf of undeserving people, & it accomplished our salvation. But Paul's focal point here is on the purpose or result of this event. Jesus' selfless giving had a dual purpose. Christ gave Himself for us 1st **to redeem us from every lawless deed**. To be redeemed is to be set free via the payment of a ransom. Jesus **gave Himself for us to redeem us**. 1st century readers were familiar with the idea of redemption of slaves.

This was...

...the practice of buying a slave's or captive's freedom by the payment of a ransom ... "to redeem" was used widely in the biblical tradition of the action taken by YHWH to set His people free from Egypt ... it had become another way of speaking of God's saving act, & it would have called to mind primarily the OT story of deliverance from Egypt as slaves.¹²

¹² Towner, p 760

The NT picks up on this imagery of slavery often. As we saw in Titus 1:1 Paul identifies his fundamental Christian identity as **slave of God**. Titus 2:14 says we're Christ's **own possession** which makes sense as slaves owned by a Master. Israel's redemption & deliverance from slavery in Egypt was no small thing. It required the almighty hand of our omnipotent Lord & it's the same when we're chosen & redeemed from bondage to sin to free us from wickedness. This ransom payment, Christ's death, delivers us **from every lawless deed**. This suggests deliverance from both the power of sin (Rom 6:17-18, 22) & the penalty of sin (Rom 6:23; 8:1). While Christ's death redeems us from sin's penalty of death (Rom 3:23; Gal 3:13), here Paul's speaking of Christ's death which redeems us from sin's power. By His death, Jesus bought believers out of the slave market of sin, releasing us from sin's bondage (Jn 8:34; Rom 6:16-22; Titus 3:3). 1 Pt 2:24 says: **He Himself brought our sins in His body up on the cross, why? so that we might die to sin & live for righteousness**. The Cretan Christians had been released from sin's shackles & now could avoid the vices mentioned in 2:2-10. Those things were part of **every lawless deed** (Rom 4:7; Heb 10:17; 1 Jn 3:4) which Christ redeemed them from.

2^{ndly}, He gave Himself for nothing less than **to purify for Himself a people for His own possession**. His death & resurrection were done **to purify** a people for Himself. God's act of purifying or sanctifying His sinful people was so He could claim a people out of a sinful world. He purchased us to purify or cleanse us. This is the promise of the new covenant: **I will sprinkle clean water on you, & you will be clean; I will cleanse you from all your filthiness & from all your idols** (Ezek 36:25). Jesus cleanses & purifies us by virtue of His vicarious & substitutionary death. He redeems us from our sin for our purification. In other words, our godliness is dependent upon God. Without the convicting & renewing work of His Spirit in our lives, we'll always rationalize our sin & continue in it. But as we grow in our affection for God because of His grace, we increasingly grow intolerant of anything that distracts us from Him & we guard our hearts from all that distances & distracts us from Him. Christ redeemed us both to deliver us from wickedness & to purify us for Himself, to make us eager to do what is good. Paul doesn't mention forgiveness of sins here but it's assumed. What Paul says very clearly is that Christ died to make us holy, to make us a people that are His

possession, a fact made clear by our desire to do **good deeds**, to do His works while we're in this world. Christ's cleansing & claiming work has a noticeable effect on those changed by it: they are **eager for good deeds**. These aren't optional activities or even virtuous goals for believers. They're the inevitable outworking of Jesus' saving action in us. We're all naturally slaves of sin & in need of someone to set us free. Sin is a wicked slave-master that beats us down. We're trying to make bricks without straw & have broken cisterns that hold no water. But God redeems a people out of slavery for His own possession. As Peter writes,

...you were not redeemed with perishable things like silver or gold from your futile way of life inherited from your forefathers, but with precious blood, as of a lamb unblemished & spotless, the blood of Christ. For He was foreknown before the foundation of the world, but has appeared in these last times (1 Pt 1:18-20).

Paul used the words in Acts 20:28 of **the church of God, which He (Christ) purchased with His own blood**. & Eph 5:25 & 27 tells us, **Christ loved the church & gave Himself up for her, so that He might sanctify her why? ... that she would be holy**. Look at Titus 2:14 again: He **gave Himself for us to redeem us from every lawless deed & to purify us so we'd be eager for good deeds**. Jesus didn't just die on the cross just for our forgiveness of sins & salvation but also for our sanctification, our purification, so that we don't have to live in sinful deeds anymore but can put them to death. He appeared in grace not only to save us but also to enable us to be holy. Christ died, not only so we might **die to sin** but also so we might **live to righteousness** (1 Pt 2:24). Don't miss this. When God redeems us, we aren't free from all yokes & free to do our own thing & live our own life. No, Jesus says what? **Take My yoke upon you**. The difference is His **burden is light** (Mt 11:29). Everyone has a yoke. Everyone's a slave of something. As believers we're slaves of God. Rom 6 says believers are saved so they can be slaves of righteousness rather than slaves of sin. As slaves of Christ, we can't just do whatever we want, we have to do what He wants. Slaves do what their Master wants. Paul says to the Corinthians, **you are not your own. For you have been bought for a price: therefore glorify God in your body** (1 Cor 6:19b-20), that's slave talk. We're under the Lord's yoke now as His slaves & that's a good thing. The attitude of the Redeemer toward the redeemed is that we're precious to Him despite the sin that required such sacrifice from Him. These words breathe the grace that characterizes our God & should inspire us to do the **good deeds** that please Him. The

people that are God's own by virtue of His unconditional favor & sacrifice are to be **eager for good deeds** (14). Here again is the theme that grace leads to godliness. Most of us only dabble at **good deeds** when it's convenient, when we don't have anything else we'd rather do. But if we've been bought out of the slave market of sin by the blood of our great God & Savior, we should be fanatics for **good deeds**. We ought to be totally devoted to serving our new Master. Because Christ's work alone purchases our salvation through the redeeming price of His blood & death on the cross, & because Christ's work alone purifies us through the cleansing that His blood supplies, we don't look to our works as the basis of acceptance with God. Doing what God requires doesn't make us His own, but having been made His own by no work of ours, we now love to love Him who 1st loved us (1 Jn 4:19). Such love has profound effects upon our attitudes & actions.¹³ When you call Jesus *LORD* you're saying He's your Master & you're His slave who only wants to serve Him. This means the end of our self, our will, our control, our life. That helps us understand why Jesus said, **If anyone will come after Me, let him deny himself** (Mt 16:24). That too is slave talk. It's the end of you & everything is about your Lord now. Sin is a horrible slave master but Jesus is a loving Lord & merciful Master. He's not a harsh, abusive tyrant. He's a gracious Master who condescends to rescue those enslaved to sin. He Himself comes to the slave market of sin & purchases us with a price, the highest price, His own death in exchange for slaves that hated Him. While we were yet sinners (Rom 5:8), Christ died to buy us back with His precious blood for His own possession & for His own glory. The slaves God chooses of His own will & pleasure He also redeems. & all these slaves will be taken to His home. There they are provided for, protected, & personally loved. Amazingly, our Master Himself came as a slave to serve. Phil 2 says He emptied Himself & took on the form of a slave when He came to earth, dying on a cross as a slave or common criminal. What will ultimately make us holy isn't our own willpower, nor guilt, nor an inspiring message, but a deep understanding & appreciation of the grace of God in Christ. The resultant love for God drives out & replaces our natural love for sin. The Puritans called this the *power of new affections*. They

¹³ R. Kent Hughes & Bryan Chapell, [1 & 2 Timothy & Titus: To Guard the Deposit](#), p 349

taught this truth with the image of the live oak, a type of tree whose leaves, though dead, stuck to their branches through the winter. What eventually forces the leaves from the tree isn't the cold or winter wind, but the new life of springtime welling up within the branches & forcing out what was dead. In a similar way, though we are God's people, there yet clings to us affections for sin that we must confess & forsake. These evil affections are replaced by an eagerness for good only as an understanding of God's grace grows within us & drives out the old affections with the new life that is profound in its love for Him.¹⁴ Think of this: Not only did Jesus give His life as ransom for us paying in full to redeem us from the slave market of sin at the price required, His own death, but:

- He who called His disciples slaves, also calls them His friends (Jn 15:12-15)
- After the resurrection He called them His own brethren (Jn 20:17)
- He frees His slaves from eternal bondage, forgives all the sins we were enslaved to, & gives us the power to conquer these sins that so easily entangle us (Heb 12:1)
- God takes His slaves & makes them sons & gives us all the rights as sons (1 Jn 3:1)
- He adopts us into His own family & calls us joint-heirs with Christ (Rom 8:17)

Once we were Satan's; now we're the Son's. Once we were sin's; now we're the Savior's. Once we were foreigners; now we're family. Christ took our sin so that we can sing, **Worthy is the lamb that was slain ... for You were slaughtered, & You purchased people for God with Your blood from every tribe, language, people, & nation** (Rev 5:9, 12). Instead of being in the lake of fire in Rev 20, we actually get to be a part of the great choir of Rev 5, praising the redemption of the Lamb forever. Jesus appeared in grace the 1st time as a lowly slave & died as a common criminal, so that we, the guilty ones, could be free to serve Him & live eternally with Him. He paid the debt He did not owe for the debt we could not pay. He took our place on the cross, the punishment we deserved, the wrath of God that we should have received, & instead, God lavishes His grace on us in this life sanctifying & conforming us to the image of Christ & enabling us to be **eager for good deeds**. We've been redeemed from every **lawless deed** so we can be eager to do **good deeds**. As those who are

¹⁴ R. Kent Hughes & Bryan Chapell, [1 & 2 Timothy & Titus: To Guard the Deposit](#), Preaching the Word, p 350

His we are now **eager to do good works**. We now have a consuming desire to honor our great God & Savior for His glorious work of redemption. Our zealous works are the natural response to His work.¹⁵ **Eager** is the word we get *zealous* & *zealot* from. We can now be **zealous for good deeds** or *zealots of good works* & have *a zest for noble deeds*. The Cretan believers had been purified by the death of Christ (Eph 5:25-27) &, therefore, could now live out the virtues mentioned in vss 2-10, & so can we. These virtues are part of the **good deeds** for which we're all to be eagerly zealous for (Mt 6:1-4; Gal 6:9-10; Heb 10:24; 13:16; Js 4:17; 1 Pt 2:12; 3 Jn 1:11; etc).

The cost of the cross was the greatest price, the greatest sacrifice, the self-giving of the sinless Savior in death. If you haven't understood & embraced those truths fully before, I pray you will today. By God's grace come to repentance, & trust in Christ & His cross, & follow & live for Him. If you've already done that, I pray this passage will encourage you & that you'll live more in light of the truths it proclaims. As those who claim to be Christians, we must be grace-empowered, repentant, Christ-focused, & cross-centered. This is the life that a Christian lives from the time he's saved to the time he's taken from this world, either by death or by Christ's return. It's a life of faith & **hope**. Our **hope** is the certainty of things not seen, things that are still to come, but are sure to come. We have a great God & Savior, a great grace, a great redemption, a great future, & a great calling to be zealous for good works. Paul's telling us to put into practice what Christ has done for & given to us. We're to possess our possessions our Savior has bought for us. We must determine that each day we'll be zealots for good works. & then look back with thanksgiving & gratitude to Good Friday & Easter & look forward to the imminent return of the Son of God. Remember what's already been done for you & given to you & in the strength of that, live for Him. God's grace has appeared in the person & work of Jesus so that the glory of God would be magnified in & through Christ & His people. May we all live now in the freedom that our God & Savior has provided, until that day when we're with Him forever.

¹⁵ Daniel L. Akin, [Living Doctrine: The Book of Titus](#), ed. Craig G. Bartholomew & David Beldman, Transformative Word, p 52