

Grace for Life Titus 2:11-14

- Intro myself
- Bibles—Titus 2:11-14
- Recognize veterans
- Titus background... small (3 short chapters) but mighty.

The Apostle Paul is writing to Titus. Titus is a close companion of Paul's who has been left on the Island of Crete (largest island of Greece) to put things in order in the existing churches on the island.

Appoint qualified leaders; and teach sound doctrine.

And right in the middle of his instruction to Titus, Paul lays out the beauty, purpose and hope of the doctrine of salvation...God's grace.

Titus 2:11-14

11 For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation for all people, 12 training us to renounce ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright, and godly lives in the present age, 13 waiting for our blessed hope, the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ, 14 who gave himself for us to redeem us from all lawlessness and to purify for himself a people for his own possession who are zealous for good works.

It's another amazing passage about God's grace from the pen of Paul.

We far too easily forget the glories of the grace of God. We can quickly relegate it to some theological system or belief. We can forget the value and impact the grace of God is supposed to have on our life and church today.

If we are not careful we can be like the lady in France who recently discovered what she had hanging on her kitchen wall. It was discovered that a long-lost painting by a celebrated Italian artist was hanging above her stove. The painting ended up being so rare that it sold at an auction for 26.6 million dollars, which set a new world record.

If I didn't already know that the artwork in our home came from TJ Maxx, I'd get everything appraised.

But it's what the lady believed about the painting that stood out to me. *She believed the painting was just an old religious icon with little value.* She lived a life based on the belief that a little 8 x 10 painting depicting the crucifixion of Jesus didn't have any real significance on her life. But, when she had it authenticated and appraised, her life changed forever.

May we never believe that about the gospel of grace. *The gospel is not an old religious icon with little value.* It's a priceless work of redemption. The gospel is the greatest work and gift to ever grace the stage of history.

The gospel being the undeserved, unearnable goodness and kindness of God toward us for salvation. God's grace. That's how Paul defines grace a chapter later in Titus.

(Onscreen) But when the goodness and loving kindness of God our Savior appeared.

Titus 3:4

Paul always starts where real life begins---the grace of God.

Which should cause us to...

Stand amazed at God's saving grace. (11,14)

11 For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation for all people

Grace is not a *thing*, but a *person*. It's none other than the person of Jesus Christ. God's eternal grace is personified in the eternal person and work of Jesus Christ as fully man and fully God.

2000 years ago, at the appointed time, the second person of the Trinity, God the Son, stepped down from glory and entered the world that he created. The Creator became the created. The grace of God appearing in the person of Jesus Christ. *The greatest miracle ever btw*

God is so gracious, he is so *good* and *kind* that he did that.

And yet the argument or accusation that is often leveled against God is the question, "If God is good, then why...?"

God is good. God is eternally good, even when bad things happen to us and around us. His goodness is not somehow diminished because of his apparent lack of action.

Because, God has done something. He gave and did the unheard of.

God is so *good* he did the unthinkable. God is so *kind* he did the unimaginable. God's goodness was perfectly displayed in the bloody and finished work of the cross. God's kindness put Jesus on the cross so we wouldn't be placed in hell. In doing so, God has defeated sin, evil, and death.

And there will be a day all sin, evil and death will be gone from this world.

But until then, we have what God's grace has already done...

We have salvation. Salvation that is now available to all who believe and trust in the name of Jesus. The exclusive and free gift of Jesus Christ.

- This is the past work of grace: He has appeared in order to deliver us from the *penalty* of sin.

Look at verse 14 as Paul expounds on the work of Jesus.

14 who gave himself for us to redeem us from all lawlessness and to purify for himself a people for his own possession who are zealous for good works.

Jesus paid the highest price for us; Jesus cleansed us with his atoning death (what can wash away my sins? Nothing but the blood of Jesus!);

Jesus owns us with his perfect love;

Jesus gives us the passion and desire to serve him.

That's the grace of God who has appeared.

May we stand in awe...

- Of the fact that before the foundations of the earth salvation was God's plan.
- Of the reality that we are even saved today. (why me?)

Simply because of Titus 3:5

(Onscreen) he saved us, not because of works done by us in righteousness, but according to his own mercy,

May we stand amazed at God's beautiful saving grace.

Communion/ Baptism services, last week (go watch them, again) grace showing up in 23 lives.

Jesus has appeared bringing salvation and that means for you today. His grace is here. If you have never received his grace, ask him today to save you. Then stand amazed that he has.

Paul goes on to explain what God's grace is doing currently within the church.

12 training us to renounce ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright, and godly lives in the present age,

God's grace trains us to...

Submit to God's sanctifying grace. (12)

The grace of God is not done working in our lives.

To ignore the *present* impact of the gospel of grace is to not grasp the full purpose of the gospel.

Which means, the gospel is not just for *lost* people. The gospel is for *saved* people too.

The gospel is just as relevant for a believer today as it was the day they believed.

God's grace is saving grace for sure...but's it's also a sanctifying grace.

Paul makes it clear that our Christianity should be consistently marked with actions, attitudes and desires which are fundamentally different than the world we were saved out of.

We are to be a sanctified: that means, we are to progressively sin less and be like Christ more. Resulting in less of us, and more of Jesus.

Sanctification is God's will for your life. We glorify God

Only with grace can we be a set apart and holy people. Holy like Jesus.

And the first step is to humbly submit to the gracious work of the HS on our lives.

Not that we don't play a role...we do, but it starts with his grace through the HS within us.

We submit, he changes. We surrender, he transforms. We place our lives in the capable and caring hands of the Spiritual Surgeon and he goes to work.

Unfortunately, the church tends to fall into two groups when it comes to sanctification.

1. We know we need to change, but we try to do it ourselves. We can no more change ourselves than we can save ourselves.
2. We are simply good with our current state. Content. Satisfied. We have changed a little. Not as bad as we were, not as good as we could be, but God's grace...

Both of those are wrong. We need to strive for a humble dependence on grace. And we need to live with a holy dissatisfaction with our spiritual growth.

➤ Looking back at verse 12, we begin to see our role in sanctification..

God's grace trains us to say no, to renounce, that which is contrary to the conduct becoming of a believer.

The verb *renounce* that Paul uses here is literally the idea of training up a child. The idea of a parent exerting their authority onto the child for the purpose of discipline.

It's the job of the parent to train up a child in what is right and wrong.

And it usually starts with that two-letter word *no*.

That word *no*, is training the child to understand that he belongs to a kingdom that is under the lordship of another. The child is not his own king. The child doesn't get to be a sovereign nation. He is a subject of the "lord" of the home.

So, it is with believers.

Salvation... transfers us from the kingdom of this world to an eternal kingdom of heaven. The King of Heaven now sits on the throne of our lives. And that gives him ultimate authority over our lives.

We are not to build our own little kingdom. We are Kingdom of heaven citizens who are to surrender and submit to the King of kings.

And God provides the grace to do that. Our heavenly Father trains his children (the church) with grace in order to be sanctified.

So that we have the ability to say no for ourselves.

To say no:

- To *ungodliness*: to be ungodly is to live a life without regard for God and his way. "*I don't disregard him.*" Maybe not in the entirety of your life but perhaps maybe in some areas you refuse to give him rightful place and influence. "You can have that Lord, but that's mine." By grace say no to ungodliness.
- To *worldly passions*: an overwhelming desire for the things and pleasures of the world—the fallen world that stands in opposition to God's Kingdom.

(Onscreen) 1 John 2:16 For all that is in the world—the desires of the flesh and the desires of the eyes and pride of life—is not from the Father but is from the world.

We are to say no to a life of pursuing materialism, comfort, power and position.

By grace, say no.

But Grace also provides the ability for us to say yes.

To the things of the Lord. To live in a manner worthy of the gospel. To love what he loves. To love like he loved and to live like he lived. **Self-controlled, upright, godly.**

- *Self-controlled*: a theme for Paul in this letter. Restraining yourself from doing whatever you want to do. Fruit of the HS...produced through him by grace.
- *Upright*: treating others as you want to be treated—justly and honestly.
- *Godly*—if ungodliness is the absence of God, then godliness is all about God's glory and his will in every aspect of your life. "Have it all, it's yours anyway."

We are unable to live as we are called on our own. We are not sufficient for these things. Only by submitting to his grace are we sanctified in this present age.

Grace provides us ...

Hope in Christ's returning glory (13)

13 waiting for our blessed hope, the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ,

Just like he came the first time, he will appear again: *suddenly, personally, visibly and bodily*. But this time in full glory

The second coming won't be about dealing with sin but completing what was started in the believer, the work in us. Being saved and sanctified will culminate with us being glorified.

Not onscreen 1 John 3:2 Beloved, we are God's children now, and what we will be has not yet appeared; but we know that when he appears, we shall be like him, because we shall see him as he is.

The Bible says he will return and so we believe it. (Some 90 verses)

If grace is the bedrock of our faith, then the glorious return of Jesus is the hope we look for in the future. And it's all rooted in grace.

When we see him, we will be like him, transformed from glory to glory.

Our faith will be sight and we will be with him permanently forever.

The renouncing of sin will cease. The need to say no will end.

Everything we didn't want to be and hated, will be no more.

Everything we wanted to become, will be.

We will only want to say yes. Yes, to Jesus.

Church, that is our blessed hope. But we don't always live like his return is our blessed hope. We fail to remember that his return is our greatest hope. We fail far too often to remember Someone is coming again.

BTW...if your attitude is "whatever, his return in my lifetime is slim to none." Ok, but the chance of you dying and going before him is 100%.

Our hope for Jesus' return can easily be diluted or misplaced.

Maybe because...

(Onscreen... one at a time)

1. Our love for the world is too much (the world has our heart and mind-Ps 73:25 there is nothing on earth that I desire besides you.)
2. Our love for Jesus is too little (We don't know him well enough—Abiding)
3. Our passion for the church is too small (this is a foretaste of heaven)
4. Our understanding of heaven is too unbiblical (heaven is boring)

Examine your life and see if any of those apply.

Our life today is this waiting in the in-between time of Jesus' first appearance and his return. Looking back and looking forward,

We are waiting, but may we not be found idle

Let us wait well with the grace that only God can provide.

Let us wait saved, sanctified and hoping with eager anticipation for who is to come.

Let's pray.