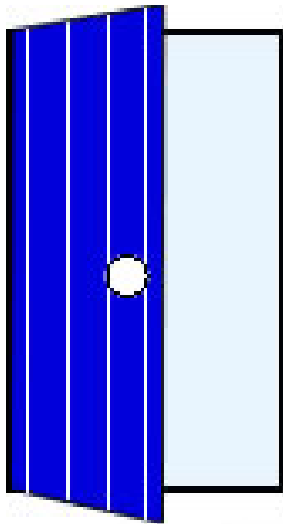


BIBLE STUDIES



Mill Lane Chapel

Titus

6) ***“We should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world”***

Read Chapter 2: 11-15

We have noticed that if in **Chapter 1** false teaching must be met by **sound doctrine**, then in **Chapter 2** adverse criticism must be met by **good behaviour**. With this in mind, Paul addresses the conduct of older men (v2); older women (vv3-4); younger women (vv4-5); younger men (vv6-8) and bond-slaves (vv9-10). In our analysis of the chapter we called these verses:

1) THE ACCOMPANIMENTS OF SOUND DOCTRINE, vv2-10

These instructions are given for very good reasons, and these are made clear in the following verses:

- **“That** the word of God be not blasphemed” (v5). The word of God must not be brought into disrepute.
- **“That** he which is of the contrary part may be ashamed, having no evil thing to say of you” (v8). The servants of God must not be brought into disrepute.
- **“That** they may adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour in all things” (v10). The integrity of bond-servants (employees) must not be brought into disrepute.

These very important verses (vv2-10) describe “the things that **become** (befit) sound doctrine” (v1). Now we come to the “sound doctrine” **itself** (vv11-15). So:

2) THE FEATURES OF SOUND DOCTRINE, vv11-14

“Sound doctrine” is the basis of ‘sound behaviour’, and this is emphasised by the ‘thought-flow’ in vv9-12: “Exhort servants to be obedient to their own masters, and to please them well in all things; not answering again; not purloining, but shewing all good fidelity; that they may adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour in all things. **For** the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to men, teaching us that denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world...” We have seen **how** we are to behave. Now we are to see **why** we should behave in this way.

Paul advances two great reasons for godly living: **(a)** the appearance of “the grace of God” (vv11-12); **(b)** the “glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ” or (JND) the ‘appearing of the glory of our great God and Saviour Jesus Christ’ (vv13-14). We are asked to look back in vv11-12. The

outstanding feature in these verses is **grace**. We are asked to look forward in vv13-14. The outstanding feature here is **glory**. In the first case, Paul uses the verb *epiphaino* (AV “hath appeared”, v11), and in the second the noun *epiphania* (AV “appearing”, v13). In connection with the first, W.E.Vine gives the meaning as ‘to appear, become visible’. In connection with the second, ‘a shining forth’. Vine points out that the noun is also used in 2 Tim. 1: 10 of the first coming of the Lord Jesus.

A) The appearance of the grace of God, vv11-12

In these verses we have doctrinal statement (v11) and a practical application (v12). They are mutually complimentary.

a) The doctrinal statement, v11

“For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men”, or ‘For the grace of God hath appeared, bringing salvation to all men’ (RV), or ‘For the grace of God which carries with it salvation for all men has appeared’ (JND). This is a tremendous statement about salvation, and we should notice:

i) Salvation is undeserved. Salvation finds its source in the grace of God. “The **grace of God** that bringeth salvation...” The word rendered “grace” is *charis*, meaning ‘gift’. Compare Eph. 2: 8-9, “For by grace (*charis*) are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift (*doron*) of God: not of works, lest any man should boast”.

It is not only that God is graciously-disposed towards men: He has actively displayed His grace. It is “the grace of God that **bringeth** salvation”. In the “ages to come” he will “shew the exceeding riches of his grace, in his kindness toward us through Christ Jesus” (Eph. 2: 7).

ii) Salvation is unmistakable. It has “**appeared** to all men”. As we have noted, the words “hath appeared” (*epiphaino*) mean, ‘become visible’ or ‘shined upon’. The aorist tense is used here, indicating that it was on a particular occasion that this became true. Compare Titus 3: 4, “But after that the kindness and love of God our Saviour toward man appeared (*epiphaino*)...” Salvation rests upon historical facts: “Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; and...was buried, and...rose again the third day according to the scriptures; and...was seen...” (1 Cor. 15: 3-5). In the words of Paul to Agrippa, “For the king knoweth of these things, before whom also I speak freely; for I am persuaded that none of these things are hidden from him; for this thing was not done in a corner” (Acts 26: 26.)

iii) Salvation is unlimited. . The scope of the grace of God is clear: it includes “all men”: JND has ‘salvation for all men’. We know that God “will have all men to be saved” and that with this in view, the Lord Jesus “gave himself a ransom for

all..." (1 Tim. 2: 3-6. The Lord "is not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance" (2 Pet. 3: 9).

b) The practical application, v12

"Teaching us, that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world". Grace does something. It educates us and, as David West observes, 'we never graduate from the school of God's grace in this life'. The word "teaching" (*paiduo*) means 'training' or 'disciplining'.

Jude refers to "certain men crept in unawares" who turned "the grace of our God into lasciviousness" (Jude v4). The word "lasciviousness" means absence of restraint, licentiousness. These people "call evil good, and good evil." they "put darkness for light, and light for darkness" (Isaiah 5: 20). They argue the grace of God frees up people to do as they please. Liberty becomes licence. Paul confronts the argument with the words, "Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound? God forbid" (Rom. 6: 1-2). A religion like this is certain to attract plenty of followers! The grace of God frees up people, not to do as they please, but to please God: "that denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world (age)". Rightly understood, the grace of God excludes evil, and promotes good in our lives:

i) Negatively. "Denying (literally 'having denied') ungodliness and worldly lusts. "Ungodliness" means want of reverence. All that is connected with a life without God. "Worldly lusts" refers to desires limited to and characterised by this world as estranged from God. See 1 John 2: 15-17.

ii) Positively. "We should live soberly, righteously, and godly". That is: selfward, manward, Godward. "Soberly": that is, to self, involving self restraint. Compare 1: 8; 2: 2; 2: 4; 2: 5 (discreet); 2: 8. "Righteously": that is, to others. "Godly": that is, to God. "Godly" (*eusebos*), as opposed to ungodliness, describes a right attitude to God, and means living in a way which is well-pleasing to Him.

B) The appearance in glory of our God and Saviour, vv13-14

The connection between these verses and those preceding, lies in the transition from "this present world" ('the present course of things', JND) to the future. The Lord Jesus came in grace to this world in which we now live, but He will come again in glory. As D.E.Hiebert observes, 'In verse 11 we had the past epiphany in grace; here the future epiphany in glory'.

Once again, in these verses we have doctrinal statement (v13) and a practical application (v14). They are, again, mutually complimentary.

a) The doctrinal statement, v13

“Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God, and our Saviour Jesus Christ” or ‘Looking for the blessed hope **even** the appearing of the glory of our great God and Saviour Jesus Christ’. The word “blessed” (*makarios*) means, literally, ‘happy’.

The word “looking” (*prosdechomai*) ‘has an atmosphere of expectancy about it and an eagerness to welcome the person or thing looked for’ (D.E.West). The word occurs again in Jude v21. The words “hope” and “appearing” are under the covering of one article. Hence the rendering above: “the blessed hope **even** the appearing...”

It has been customary for many believers, following the AV rendering, to distinguish between “the blessed hope” and “the glorious appearing”, that is, between the coming of the Lord **for** His people, and His coming **with** His people. According to scholars, the grammar favours the rendering ‘Waiting for the blessed hope **even** the appearing of our great God and Saviour Jesus Christ’, but this in no way cancels the expectation of the Lord’s return for His people prior to His “glorious appearing” on earth. Since this includes His people, for when He comes He will be “glorified in his saints, and...be admired in all them that believe” (2 Thess. 1: 10), it follows that it will be a “blessed hope” for them since it involves first being “caught up...to meet the Lord in the air” in order to accompany Him on His return to earth. The verse emphasises two great facts about the Lord Jesus:

i) His deity. He is ‘our great God and Saviour Jesus Christ’ (JND). Both “God” and “Saviour Jesus Christ” are governed by one article. The Lord Jesus is “our great God and Saviour”. The expression is unique in the New Testament. It emphasises the greatness of the One who “gave himself for us” (v14). But, bearing in mind that the verse refers primarily to His appearing on earth, there is a strong suggestion here of His vindication in the very place of His rejection. Men had denied His deity. Having said, “My Father worketh hitherto, and I work”, the Jews “sought the more to kill him, because he had not only broken the sabbath, but said also that God was his Father, making himself equal with God” (John 5: 17-18). They said, “For a good work we stone thee not; but for blasphemy; and because that thou, being a man, makest thyself God” (John 10: 33). (For Christians, the great wonder is that ‘being God, He made Himself man!’). But all men will acknowledge His deity when He returns!

The “man of sin” will sit “in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God” (2 Thess. 2: 4). But there is no competition, for when ‘our great God and Saviour’ appears, He will consume him “with the spirit of his mouth” and destroy him “with the brightness of his coming” (2 Thess. 2: 8).

ii) His glory. It is His “glorious appearing”. At His first coming, men said “He hath no form nor comeliness; and when we shall see him, there is no beauty that

we should desire him” (Isaiah 53: 2). There was no visible glory about the Lord Jesus when Pilate said to said to the multitude, “Behold the man”. He stood there “wearing the crown of thorns, and the purple robe” (John 19: 5). At His return, men will see “the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven, with power and great glory” (Matt. 24: 30).

We will see His glory before it is revealed to the world. The Lord’s own request will be fully answered: “Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory, which thou hast given me: for thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world” (John 17: 24). We shall see Him, not as He was, but “as he is” (1 John 3: 2).

Every mark of dark dishonour
Heaped upon His thorn-crowned brow:
Every pang of His heart’s sorrow
Told in answering glory now.

b) The practical application, v14

“Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works” We must notice:

i) What He has done for us. “Who gave himself for us”. Note: “**gave** himself”. He gave Himself voluntarily. Compare Gal. 2: 20; Eph. 5: 2. D.E.Hiebert puts it like this: ‘It was a definite, voluntary act on His part (“who **gave** himself for us”); it was an exhaustive act (“who gave **himself** for us”); it was substitutionary (“who gave himself **for us**”)’.

ii) Why He gave Himself for us. . We must look at this negatively and positively. In redeeming us He broke the power of sin. In purifying us He removed the pollution of sin.

- **Negatively.** “To redeem us from all iniquity”. (Compare Psalm 130: 8, “And he shall redeem Israel from all his iniquities”). The word “redeem” (*lutroo*) means to release on payment of a ransom. The word “from” (*apo*) means ‘away from’, and “iniquity” (*anomia*) means ‘lawlessness’.

- **Positively.** “And purify (*katharizo*) unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works”. The aorist tense is used here. The word “purify” means to cleanse from admixture. We have been given a new standing before God. We have been suited for His presence. Sin makes us guilty and dirty. The words “a peculiar (*peripoiesis*) people” mean ‘to make us His own people...His own possession’. See also 1 Pet. 2: 9, citing Exodus 19: 5.

On his part, He has redeemed, purified, and made us His own. We must now supply our part, and be “zealous of good works”. W.E.Vine points out that the

word “zealous” (*zelotes*) is actually a noun meaning ‘an uncompromising partisan’. The ‘zealots’ were an extreme section of the Pharisees, bitterly antagonistic to the Romans. To this sect Simon, one of the apostles, had belonged (Luke 6: 15; Acts 1: 13). This should give us some idea of the way in which we should pursue “good works!”

We are going to see the One who died for us. There is therefore every reason **to live for Him between the two appearing**, that is, “in this present world” (v12).

The chapter concludes with a restatement of the responsibilities of Titus himself: “These things speak and exhort and reprove with all authority. Let no man despise thee” (v15). Titus was to do three things:

(i) He was to “speak” (*laleo*, the usual word for speaking). He was to set forth the truth. **(ii) He was to “exhort”**. He was to apply truth. The word *parakaleo* has the meaning of encouragement. Compare Deut. 3: 28 where the Lord told Moses to encourage Joshua (J.Waldron). **(iii) He was to “reprove.”** That is convict (*elencho*). He was to do this “with all authority”, and could do so because he had an epistle from an apostle. But, as D.E.Hiebert points out, the ministry of Titus rested not merely on the authority he had received from Paul, but on the truth itself. The authority of the teacher today is no less! It has been nicely said that the words, “These things speak and exhort and reprove with all authority”, do not raise the minister above the truth, but the truth above the minister.

“Let no man despise thee”. This could be a warning to all who would withstand Titus. The word “despise” (*periphroneo*), means ‘to think round a thing, to turn over in the mind’ hence, ‘to have thoughts beyond, to despise’ (W.E.Vine). Paul evidently refers here to people who consider themselves big enough to disregard the authority of Titus. It is the picture of a man attempting to rationalise himself into a position where he can evade his responsibility to obey God’s word (D.E.Hiebert). (Note the word “despise” in 1 Tim. 4: 12 (*kataphroneo*) means, according to W.E.Vine, ‘to think down upon or against anyone’).

But it could also be a warning to Titus himself. ‘The life and conduct of Titus were to be such as to add weight to his words; he must see to it that he gives no occasion for anyone to despise him. What a lesson for those who seek to teach and minister to the needs of God’s people today!’ (D.E.West).

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