



Living Christian In 'This Present World'

Titus Chapter 2

By

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We are studying Paul's letter to Titus to learn how to 'live Christian' in this present world. We invite you to read [the introduction to this series](#) for some historical background.

We looked at the importance of elders teaching sound doctrine in the last part of our special series. We now move to what sound doctrinal teaching can accomplish in a local church. This is all part of what it means to live Christian in this present world.

Titus 2:1-5

“But as for you, speak the things which are proper for sound doctrine: that the older men be sober, reverent, temperate, sound in faith, in love, in patience; the older women likewise, that they be reverent in behavior, not slanderers, not given to much wine, teachers of good things— that they admonish the young women to love their husbands, to love their children, to be discreet, chaste, homemakers, good, obedient to their own husbands, that the word of God may not be blasphemed.”

Paul turned his attention to the next step in how Titus was to accomplish the goal of building strong churches in Crete, especially in view of what he had just written about some people in the church teaching heretical doctrines (Jewish fables, commandments of men). Paul told Titus that the elders were to shut the mouths of the false teachers in the church and rebuke them sharply. What must follow false teaching is correct teaching so that the entire congregation understands the importance of the sharp rebuke.

Notice that much of what Paul wanted Titus to emphasize in his teaching concerned personal behavior – how people lived (living Christian). Paul set a high bar for living Christian two-thousand years ago and God has not lowered the bar since then. If we think things are different now because we're somehow smarter or more advanced, we need to think again. The words Paul wrote to Titus then are still incumbent upon all of us now.

It's important to see how Paul structured his letter. So far, we have seen the importance of qualified elders and the work they do in shutting down false teaching in the church. The purpose for doing that is to have a healthy church and encourage Christians to live Christian in the present world. That means knowing and living sound doctrine. Doing that supports the ministry of preaching the Gospel and making disciples.

We will see Paul address five specific groups of people in churches in Titus 2 –

1. older men
2. older women
3. young women
4. young men
5. slaves

We will begin with the first three groups in this part of the study and look at the other two in the next part.

- speak the things which are proper for sound doctrine ... Paul told Titus to speak (λάλει – say, proclaim) the things that are proper (πρέπει – fitting, consistent with, suitable, right) for sound doctrine (ὑγιαινούση διδασκαλία – healthy teaching, uncorrupted instruction) ... Paul used the word ὑγιαινούση eight times in his letters to Timothy and Titus, usually connected to “words,” “doctrine” or “faith” ... Jesus Christ wants His churches to be healthy, sound, in all of these areas ... that church health begins with the health of church leaders, the elders ...

- that the older men ... Πρεσβύτεας means “aged men, old men” ... it generally identified men who had adult children who had children of their own (grandfathers) ... if you compare what Paul told Titus to speak to older men, you’ll see how the behavior matches what Paul said about appointing elders at the beginning of the letter to Titus ... “elders” would often come from the older men in a church ... even as church elders were to be excellent examples of living Christian in the present world, all of the older men in each church were to also live exemplary lives that other members of the church and members of the community could look to as a model of what a Christian should do and say ...
- be sober ... νηφαλίους means “temperate, vigilant, not intoxicated” ...
- reverent ... σεμνούς means “dignified, serious, venerable, deeply respected, august” ... it doesn’t mean older Christian men can’t have fun, but it does mean they are dignified in their words and actions ... they have an air of seriousness about them ...
- temperate ... σώφρονας means “self-controlled, curbing one’s desires and impulses, of sound mind, well-balanced” ...
- sound in faith, in love, in patience ... Paul used the word ὑγιαίνοντας again, which goes to the health of a person ...

older men were to be healthy in respect to their faith (πίστει – faithfulness, fidelity), love (ἀγάπη – pure love, benevolent love, esteemed love) and patience (ὑπομονῇ – patient endurance, steadfastness) ... all of these attributes would be necessary in the special ministry older men have in a church ...

- the older women likewise ... πρεσβύτιδας means “aged women, older women” ... it generally identified women who had adult children who had children of their own (grandmothers) ... ὡσαύτως means “in like manner” ... older women also had an important role to play in the church ...
- that they be reverent in behavior ... καταστήματι means “demeanor, conduct, deportment, behavior” ... older women were to behave in a particular way as part of living Christian and being an example to others in the church ... they were to be reverent (ἱεροπρεπεῖς – suitable to a sacred character) ...
- not slanderers ... the Greek word is διαβόλους and is the same word used for Satan in Matthew chapters 4, 13 and 25; Luke chapters 4 and 8; John chapters 6, 8 and 13; Acts chapter 13; Ephesians chapters 4 and 6; 1 Timothy chapter 3; and 2 Timothy chapters 2 and 3 ... the word means *false accuser* ... someone who slanders is accusing others falsely, which is what Satan does ... Paul wanted Titus to teach older Christian women not to do what Satan does, not to speak the

language of the devil, which is to accuse and defame falsely ... no Christian should do that, but it's interesting that Paul would mention that specifically in context with older women in the church ... it may have been a particular problem in the churches of Crete, but is certainly something that could happen in any church ... the fact that Paul used a name of the devil in warning older women in the church about their behavior should cause all Christians to pause and consider the ramifications of such a command ...

- not given to much wine ... μηδὲ οἴνω πολλῷ δεδουλωμένας (not to wine much being enslaved) ... the word δεδουλωμένας means "to enslave, bring under subjection" ... the problem Paul pointed out was of older women becoming enslaved or under subjection of much wine ... Paul wrote something similar in 1 Timothy 3:3 where he was addressing the qualifications of elders ... older men and older women are examples, role models, to younger men and women ... they must control themselves physically, mentally, emotionally and socially ... drinking wine was part of the food and beverage culture of the time, so that's not the issue ... the issue is both being enslaved and subject to much wine and becoming drunk from the drinking of wine ... Paul warned about the dangers of both ... a Christian's physical appetite is also in view here ...

Paul had already quoted from a Cretan philosopher who wrote centuries earlier that Cretans were “lazy gluttons” ... the Greek word translated “glutton” is γαστέρες and means “belly, stomach” ...

- teachers of good things ... older women in the church were to be καλοδιδασκάλους (a teacher of good, teacher of what is noble) ... the word comes from *kalós* which means “attractively good” and *didáskalos* which means “teacher of winsome goodness” ... we get our English word “didactic” from *didáskalos* ... the life of an older Christian woman was to be pure and attractive to those who knew her so that she could teach goodness to younger women in the church ...
- that they admonish the young women ... ἵνα σωφρονίζωσιν τὰς νέας (so that they may train the young women) ... older women in the church were to “train” younger women ... unfortunately, that is a role the modern church rarely emphasizes ... many older women in churches don't see that they have much of a ministry left to do ... I know because I have talked with them over a period of many decades ... I've taught and preached on the subject, but still little to no change in how the church looks at older women ... that blame falls on church leaders who should know better ... Paul didn't hide this from the church, he made it clear to anyone in leadership who

reads the Bible and believes it's true ... older women are in a powerful position to help shape the lives of younger women in the church ... for church leaders to ignore that fact is tragic ... remember, we're looking at *Living Christian in the Present World* ... if church leaders bypass any part of Paul's commands to the church, they are doing the members of their church a great disservice and withholding some of the blessings God has for His people when they obey Him in everything ...the word σωφρονίζωσιν means "to recall to one's senses, admonish, make sober-minded, make sane, living in divine moderation") ... that's the kind of training ministry older women have in the church, if they are allowed to do it ... so, what areas of training did Paul recommend?

- to love their husbands ... φιλόνηδρους εἶναι (loving one's husband to be) ... an older woman who had lived a life of loving her husband would certainly qualify as someone who could teach a younger woman about loving their husband ... remember, older women in the church are role models for younger women ... loving your husband is important to marriage and family, including church family ...
- to love their children ... φιλοτέκνους (loving one's children) ... another important area of ministry for older women in the church, teach younger women to love their children ... children

respond well in a loving family relationship ... mothers who loved their husbands and children were highly regarded in both pagan and Jewish cultures of the time (based on ancient funerary inscriptions – J.N.D. Kelly, *The Pastoral Epistles*, Hendrickson, 1963, pp 240-241; “Julias Bassus to Otacilia Polla my sweetest wife, who loved her husband and children and lived with me blamelessly for thirty years.” funerary inscription at Pergamum, Marvin Vincent, *Word Studies in the New Testament*, Volume IV, Charles Scribner’s Sons, 1887)

- *to be discreet* ... σὺφρονας means “self-controlled, of sound mind, temperate, balanced, modest” ...
- *chaste* ... ἀγνάς means “pure, holy, sacred, free from ceremonial defilement” ...
- *homemakers* ... οἰκουροῦς means “workers at home, housekeeper, busy at home” ...
- *good* ... ἀγαθός means “inherently good, kind, good in nature, lack of irritability” ...
- *obedient to their own husbands* ... ὑποτασσομένας means “be subject to, submit to” ... this is similar to what Paul wrote the Colossian and Ephesian churches: “Wives, submit to your own husbands, as is fitting in the Lord” (Colossians 3:18) “Wives, submit to your own husbands, as to the Lord. For the husband is head of the wife, as also Christ is head of the

church; and He is the Savior of the body. Therefore, just as the church is subject to Christ, so *let the wives be to their own husbands in everything*" (Ephesians 5:22-24) ... it's interesting that Paul addressed both a wife's love for her husband and being obedient (subject) to her husband in the same section of Titus ... this issue has become quite contentious in modern churches and denominations to the detriment of both ... and, no, I haven't forgotten what Paul wrote to husbands: "Husbands, love your wives and do not be bitter toward them." (Colossians 3:19) "Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for her." (Ephesians 5:25) ... this is not a matter of superiority or inferiority ... Paul made that clear when he introduced the topic in his letter to the Ephesians: "submitting to one another in the fear of God." (Ephesians 5:21) ... men and women are equal in God's eyes, what differs are the roles he chosen for each to live out ... it's good for us to remember that God has a path for husbands and wives to take together in this life ... older women in the church who have walked that path can teach younger women how to walk it ... why?

- that the word of God may not be blasphemed ... ἵνα μὴ ὁ λόγος τοῦ Θεοῦ βλασφημηῆται ... Christians, men and women, have a higher purpose than themselves: what they

want, what they think, how they feel ... to many Christians today are focused on how everything impacts them personally ... what about how things impact our lives have on the precious Word of God? ... should we give that some serious consideration? ... absolutely! ... that should be our greatest consideration and highest priority ... the word βλασφημῆται means “slandered, blasphemed, maligned, speak evil against” ... *blasphéméó* is where we get the English word blaspheme ... did you know that the way a Christian lives can **blaspheme** the Word of God? ... it can and often does ... that’s Paul’s warning and he emphasizes that older Christian women play an important role in ensuring that blasphemy doesn’t happen by the way they live their lives and how they train younger women in the church ... I think that if church leaders understood what Paul said in Titus 2, they would (should) be more open to supporting older women in training younger women ... the fact we rarely see or hear this emphasized is an indictment on modern church leaders ...

We cannot live Christian if we leave out anything that our Lord and His apostles have given to us as commands. The potential for blaspheming God's Word in the way we live is a real possibility, and unfortunately, is something we see all too often in churches and ministries around the world.

Titus 2:6-10

“Likewise, exhort the young men to be sober-minded, in all things showing yourself to be a pattern of good works; in doctrine showing integrity, reverence, incorruptibility, sound speech that cannot be condemned, that one who is an opponent may be ashamed, having nothing evil to say of you. Exhort bondservants to be obedient to their own masters, to be well pleasing in all things, not answering back, not pilfering, but showing all good fidelity, that they may adorn the doctrine of God our Savior in all things.”

The Apostle Paul moves next to direct Titus about what to teach young men and bondservants who are members of local churches on Crete.

- Likewise ... ὡσαύτως (in like manner, in the same way as) ... Paul linked the next group of people in the church to the groups addressed ahead of them: older men, older women, younger women ...
- exhort the young men ... παρακάλει means “to encourage, to call to or for, summon” ... νεωτέρους is the masculine plural

of a word that means “youth, young, new, fresh” (νέος) ... the word νεωτέρους is used twice in the New Testament: Titus 2:6 and 1 Timothy 5:1 ... Paul told Timothy to exhort “younger men as brothers” and an older man “as a father” ... Paul wrote Timothy “Let no one despise your youth” ... based on Timothy’s young age when he joined Paul and Silas on a missionary journey, Timothy may have been in his early to mid 30s ... Titus joined Paul earlier than Timothy and was probably older, though not an older man ... some scholars believe Titus was in his 40s when Paul wrote him on Crete ...

- to be sober-minded ... σωφρονεῖν means “be of sound mind, sound judgment, temperate, self-controlled, sensible” ... this is similar to what Paul wrote about older women training young women to be σώφρονας (of sound mind, temperate, self-controlled) ... it is important in a church that young people learn how important self-control is in order to live Christian in the present world ... when we look at what older Christian men should be, it makes sense that the development of those character qualities would begin when they were younger men ...
- in all things ... Περὶ πάντα (in all things) may point back to the previous thought of being sober-minded, though it may lead into the next phrase ...

- showing yourself *to be* a pattern of good works ... Paul addressed Titus and his responsibility to παρεχόμενος τύπον καλῶν ἔργων (be holding forth as a pattern of good works) ... παρεχόμενος means “to furnish, present, offer, provide, show” ... τύπον comes from τύπτω which means “to strike repeatedly” ... the idea is of “a model forged by repetition” ... martial artists understand what that means ... we learn by repeating movements hundreds, even thousands of times, to perfect techniques ... showing yourself to be a pattern of good works is similar ... repeating good works hundreds, thousands, of times is important to help younger Christians understand how God wants His people to live ...
- in doctrine *showing* integrity ... ἐν τῇ διδασκαλίᾳ (in the teaching) ... as part of that pattern of good works, Titus was to demonstrate integrity ... the word ἀφθορίαν means “incorruptibility” ... it comes from the word ἄφθαρτος which means “undecaying, imperishable” ... Paul wanted Titus to demonstrate incorruptibility in his teaching ... Christian teachers must never allow their teaching to be corrupted by anything that is less than the Truth of the Gospel ... the sad fact we face today is a great corruption of teaching in the modern church ... it should not be this way, but it is ... Living Christian in the present world means teachers and preachers

must show integrity in their teaching and preaching ... this is the meaning of “sound doctrine” ...

- reverence ... σεμνότητα means “dignity, seriousness, gravity, honor” ...
- sound speech that cannot be condemned ... λόγον ὑγιῆ ἀκατάγνωστον (speech sound beyond reproach) ... ἀκατάγνωστον means “not to be condemned, beyond reproach, not open to just rebuke” ... “sound speech” (logon hygiē) may refer to a healthy, persuasive, well-thought-out, and attractively delivered presentation of the Christian gospel, characterized as ‘speech that cannot be condemned’ (Thomas Lea (2012). New American Commentary Vol 34: 1, 2 Timothy, Titus. B&H Publishing Group.)
- that one who is an opponent may be ashamed ... ἵνα ὁ ἐξ ἐναντίας ἐντραπή (so that he who is of the contrary may be ashamed) ... ἐναντίας means “hostile, opposite, opposed, adversary” ... every Christian involved in teaching/preaching the Gospel of Christ will face opposition ... how should we deal with those who oppose our Living Christian in the present world? by living our lives in the same way Paul told Titus to live and teach ... we must show integrity in our beliefs and teachings, we must be serious and speak in ways that are beyond reproach ... ἐντραπή means “to turn about, turn to

confusion, turning away in shame, put to shame” ... God can use our dignified lives and sound speech to bring our opponents to being turned away from their bad behavior to shame ... the idea is that our opponents will eventually suffer loss of respect because of their opposition to our sound doctrine and dignified living ... Living Christian has an impact on unbelievers, including those who publicly oppose our teaching ... why?

- having nothing evil to say of you ... μηδὲν ἔχων λέγειν περὶ ἡμῶν φαῦλον (nothing having to say concerning us evil) ... φαῦλον means “worthless, bad, evil” ... those who oppose serious Christians who teach and preach the sound doctrine of the Gospel of Jesus Christ will eventually be ashamed because they will have nothing bad or evil to say about us ... one of the best arguments unbelievers have against Christian beliefs are the Christians who say they believe the Gospel but live lives that oppose the truth of the Gospel ... hypocritical church members led me as a young man to atheism and public opposition of Christianity ... meeting Christians years later who lived out Christianity as Paul told Titus led me to be ashamed of my opposition to Christianity and become a Christian ... I had nothing bad to say about the Christians who actually lived

Christian which meant that the power of the Gospel truth left me without excuse ...

- *Exhort* bondservants ... the word “exhort” is implied ... Δούλους is accusative masculine plural and means “male slave” ... slavery was widespread in ancient times and was allowed by civil law ... people became slaves through many means, including socioeconomic and war (prisoners of war) ... slaves were the material possession of slave owners who had complete authority over the lives of their slaves ... many slaves became Christians and thus members of local churches ... how should Christian slaves behave?
- to be obedient to their own masters ... ἰδίους δεσπότης ὑποτάσσεσθαι (to their own masters are to be subject) ... ὑποτάσσεσθαι means “to place or rank under, to obey, submit” ... Paul was not supporting slavery, as some have accused, but was addressing a societal and legal issue ... Christians have long lived under social injustice and God’s Word teaches us how to live Christian under injustice ... we learn more about what Paul thought about slavery in his letter to Philemon ... whatever Christian slaves thought of the injustice of their situation, their higher allegiance was to Jesus Christ who became a slave (δοῦλο) that they might be free

from the power of sin (Philippians 2:5-8) ... also read Romans 6:15-23 ...

- to be well pleasing in all *things* ... εὐαρέστους means “fully acceptable, well-pleasing” ... Paul wanted Christian slaves to be well-pleasing toward their master πᾶσιν, in everything, all things ... all means all and that’s all all means (favorite saying of a professor) ... this is certainly a high standard for a slave ...
- not answering back ... μὴ ἀντιλέγοντας (not speaking in opposition) ... ἀντιλέγοντας means “to speak against, contradict, oppose, resist” ... Christian slaves were not to be confrontational with their owners to contradict, oppose or resist them ... that was not the way for a Christian slave to live Christian ...
- not pilfering ... μὴ νοσφιζομένους (not pilfering) ... there are many ways a slave could oppose a master, including speech and actions ... in addition to not speaking in opposition, a Christian slave was not to rob their master ... νοσφιζομένους means “rob, steal, pilfer, purloin, keep back” ... slaves were in the position to handle the money and property belonging to their masters ... Christian slaves were not to “keep back, steal” money or property that wasn’t theirs ... petty theft was most likely available to slaves engaged in household and other

duties for their masters ... they were to be honest in all their actions toward their masters ...

- but showing all good fidelity ... ἀλλὰ πᾶσαν πίστιν ἐνδεικνυμένους ἀγαθὴν (but all fidelity showing good) ... πίστιν means “faithfulness, trust” ... a Christian slave should be someone a master could trust ... ἐνδεικνυμένους means “show forth, prove” ... Christian slaves could prove themselves trustworthy through their words and actions concerning their master ... why do that?
- that they may adorn the doctrine of God our Savior in all things ... ἵνα τὴν διδασκαλίαν τὴν τοῦ Σωτῆρος ἡμῶν Θεοῦ κοσμῶσιν ἐν πᾶσιν (so that the doctrine of the savior of us God they may adorn in all things) ... Paul always brought Living Christian in the present world back to the impact our words and actions have on the teaching of the Gospel of Jesus Christ ... living a good life, speaking good words, and being trustworthy is not so we can be admired by others, but so the teachings of Christ will be adorned ... κοσμῶσιν means “beautify, having the right arrangement, decorate, make attractive, appealing” ...

Whether you are an older man, older woman, younger woman, younger man or a slave, if you are a Christian, God wants you to do everything you can to make the Gospel message appealing to unbelievers. We do not do that by watering down the message of God to sinners, but Living Christian in the present world.

In Summary

Here's a quick summary of the reasons Paul gave to Titus about the importance of every member of every church in Crete obeying God's commands concerning the way they lived:

- that they may be sound in the faith
- speak the things which are proper for sound doctrine
- that the word of God may not be blasphemed
- sound speech that cannot be condemned
- that one who is an opponent may be ashamed, having nothing evil to say of you
- that they may adorn the doctrine of God our Savior in all things

Titus 2:11-15

For the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men, teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in the present age, looking for the blessed hope and glorious appearing of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ, who gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us from every lawless deed and purify for Himself His own special people, zealous for good works. Speak these things, exhort, and rebuke with all authority. Let no one despise you.

I remember memorizing these verses almost 50 years ago. I was a new Christian and one of our pastors emphasized its importance to living the Christian life. Here's what we learn:

First, the Grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men. We observe two things:

1. The Grace of God brings salvation
2. The Grace of God has appeared to all men

Second, the Grace of God teaches us. We observe nine things:

1. denying ungodliness and worldly lusts
2. we should live soberly
3. we should live righteously
4. we should live godly in the present age
5. looking for the blessed hope and glorious appearing of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ
6. who gave Himself for us
7. that He might redeem us from every lawless deed
8. and purify for Himself *His* own special people
9. zealous for good works

Third, Paul gave Titus some important advice. We observe four things:

1. Speak these things
2. Exhort
3. Rebuke with all authority
4. Let no one despise you

Once we've made our observations, we can begin the process of coming to the correct interpretation. I say the correct interpretation because there is only one interpretation that is correct. That is the one that aligns with the purpose of the Holy Spirit who inspired Paul to write to Titus. My personal opinion or the personal opinion of any Bible teacher is of no particular importance in Bible study. Many teachers have many opinions. What does matter is what the Author of the Bible meant and intended when He inspired the Scripture.

We can determine the correct interpretation of any Scripture by following a basic process, which we've written about extensively the last 45+ years. You can read more about the interpretative (interpretive) process [here](#) and [here](#).

The Grace Of God

Paul wrote Titus that the “grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men.” Some scholars have written that the Grace of God is the theological basis for Christian behavior. We live Christian because of God’s Grace. We do not accomplish the task of Living Christian in this present world because we were born with an innate ability to do that or were smart enough to figure out how to do accomplish that. We were born with no ability to accomplish God’s will for our lives. We are not smart enough to figure out how to do that. In fact, as Paul wrote the Ephesians, we were “were dead in trespasses and sins” and God “made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved), and raised *us* up together, and made *us* sit together in the heavenly *places* in Christ Jesus” (Ephesians 2:1, 5-6). Paul went on to write that the salvation of God can’t be earned or deserved. It is His free gift. (Ephesians 2:8-9).

The Grace of God “that brings salvation” is the Greek word σωτήριος and means “brings saving, salvation” and has the idea of applied salvation. It is a saving that is *applied* to someone.

The Grace of God that brings salvation “has appeared to all men.”
What does that mean?

The word “appeared” is Ἐπεφάνη and means “to show forth, shine upon, to appear.” We get the English word *epiphany* from the Greek word. If someone has an “epiphany,” it means they had “a usually sudden manifestation or perception of the essential nature or meaning of something” (Merriam-Webster Dictionary). The “sudden manifestation” connected to the appearance of God’s Grace occurred when the Son of God became flesh.

And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth. JOHN 1:14

This is significant to our understanding of how the Grace of God appeared to all men. The Apostle John went on to write this:

For the law was given through Moses, but grace and truth came through Jesus Christ. No one has seen God at any time. The only begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, He has declared Him. JOHN 1:17-18

Jesus Christ, the Son of God, is the only One who can declare God to the world. No other religious teacher has ever lived or will ever live who can represent the God of Heaven. As Jesus said to one of His apostles:

I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me. JOHN 14:6

The “appearance” of Jesus Christ two-thousand years ago is what brings salvation to “all men.” The word ἀνθρώποις means “humans.” God in the Old Testament said through the prophets that He would save members of humanity who had become sinners and would do that through the appearing, dying and rising of His Anointed Son.

One of the questions I hear from non-Christians is how this verse can be true given that millions of people now and in the past have never heard the name of Jesus Christ. They ask how the salvation of God has “appeared to all men” when all people haven’t seen Jesus or heard about Him. This question should be addressed and answered. The answer is in understanding the intent of the Author, the Holy Spirit.

God is Triune, which means He is one Being and three Persons: Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Each Person of the Trinity is involved in the process of salvation appearing to all people:

- God the Father sent God the Son to live perfectly, die, rise from the dead ascend to Heaven and return to rule the world at a future time (Gospels, Acts, Apostolic Letters)
- God the Son sent God the Spirit to testify about Jesus and His salvation through convicting the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment (John 16:8)
- God the Spirit testifies about Jesus, convicts the world of sin, righteousness and judgment, saves sinners and seals them as a guarantee of our inheritance until we are with God in Heaven (Ephesians 1:13-14), and sends the redeemed to tell others about the appearance of God's Salvation through faith in Christ (John 14; Acts 1; 2 Corinthians 5; Romans 10).

Two-thousand years of Christianity demonstrates that the Holy Spirit has been, and continues to be, highly effective in reaching nations with the Gospel of Salvation. History also demonstrates the opposition from Satan to the Gospel. The devil opposed the birth and childhood of Christ (Matthew 2) and the ministry of Christ (Matthew 4). Satan also opposes all Christians in their lives and

ministries (Ephesians 6; 2 Timothy 2; 1 Peter 5). Christians, filled with the Holy Spirit, are taking the Gospel that has appeared to all men to all men (humans), but Satan opposes them. The fact that not all people in the world have heard the Gospel does not mean that the Grace of God that brings salvation has not “appeared” to all men. The Gospel is available to the entire world and Christians are and will continue to be involved in getting the Gospel message to a great multitude of “all nations, tribes, peoples, and tongues” (Revelation 7:9).

God the Father did His work of sending His Son to give His life as a ransom for many (Mark 10:45). God the Son did His work of giving His life as a ransom for many and giving the Holy Spirit to those who believed in Him (John 20:22; Acts 1:8; 2:1-4). God the Spirit did His work of testifying about Christ (John 15:26), convicting the world of sin, righteousness and judgment (John 16:8), saving us through the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Spirit (Titus 3:5) and sealing believers as the guarantee of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, to the praise of His glory (Ephesians 1:13-14).

Titus 2:11-15

For the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men, teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in the present age, looking for the blessed hope and glorious appearing of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ, who gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us from every lawless deed and purify for Himself His own special people, zealous for good works. Speak these things, exhort, and rebuke with all authority. Let no one despise you.

The Grace of God *appears* and *teaches*. It brings salvation from sin and death and instruction for godly living. The Greek word for “teaching” in Titus 2:12 is *paideuó* and means “to correct, to chasten, to discipline, to train children.” The word was used for training up a child who was under development. That’s interesting as we consider what Paul was telling Titus to do for local churches.

The Grace of God brings salvation to people, which is the idea of being *born* into the family of God. Paul often referred to Christians as *children* (e.g. Ephesians 4:14; 5:1, 8; Philippians 2;15). Both Paul and Peter described new Christians as *babes* and encouraged them

to grow in Christ (1 Corinthians 3:1; 1 Peter 2:2). An important aspect of a baby growing into childhood and adulthood is correction, discipline and training. A young Christian is developing into what God wants them to become – “conformed to the image of His Son” (Romans 8:29).

Salvation, spiritual birth, is just the beginning. Once a child is born they need to be fed regularly, cared for, discipline and trained to know how to live well in this present world. What Paul emphasized to Titus was that the Grace of God does both very well — bringing salvation and training newborns and young children how to live. Here are nine specifics Paul mentioned about the training:

1. denying ungodliness and worldly lusts
2. we should live soberly
3. we should live righteously
4. we should live godly in the present age
5. looking for the blessed hope and glorious appearing of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ
6. who gave Himself for us
7. that He might redeem us from every lawless deed
8. and purify for Himself *His* own special people
9. zealous for good works

Paul started with a negative — denying ungodliness and worldly lusts. The Greek word for denying is *arneomai* and means “say no, repudiate, deny.” How many times do parents say the word *no* to their young children? What parents are doing is denying their child of things or actions that would not be good for them. What does the parent say when their young child tries to grab a pan on top of a hot stove? **NO!** The parent knows something the child does not — that what’s in the pan on top of the hot stove is hot and will burn them. The parent says *no* out of love for the child. The child is wise to obey and learn.

What if a parent saw their child reaching their hand up to a pan on top of a hot stove and didn’t say anything to stop them? We might ask if the parent loves their child? Why would a parent not warn their child about potential danger?

In the case of the young Christian, Paul said they should *deny* ungodliness and worldly lusts. “ungodliness” is *asebeia* and means “wickedness, bold irreverence, impiety, lack of respect.” “worldly lusts” is *kosmikos epithumia* and means “pertaining to the world, belonging to the world, passionate longing, inordinate desire.”

Why should Christian leaders teach Christians to deny wickedness and passionate longings that belong to this world? Because ungodliness and worldly lusts will hurt them. What if a Christian leader doesn't train Christians to deny ungodliness and worldly lusts? Is it because the leader doesn't love the Christian or is it because the leader doesn't know better themselves? Whatever the answer to that question, leaders shouldn't be leaders if they won't or can't train members of their church to deny ungodliness and worldly lusts.

Paul then moved on to three important positives — “we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in the present age.”

- soberly .. *sóphronós*, meaning “with sound mind, true moderation, prudently.”
- righteously .. *dikaiós*, meaning “justly, uprightly.”
- godly .. *eusebós*, meaning “piously, devoutly.”

Just these three character traits cover a lot of ground for living and the living, Paul wrote, should be “in the present age” — *nun aión*, “now, present, time span, age.” In light of what is going on now and what has gone on before, we need to live soberly, righteously and godly in this present age.

Look around and what do you see? Depending on where you live you may see deep divisions among your fellow citizens. You may see opposition to Christianity, possibly to the point of severe persecution. Some of the Christians we are in contact with around the world have recently suffered the loss of loved ones and friends to martyrdom. Some have spent time in jail because of their Christian beliefs. Some have suffered the loss of property, homes, and businesses. This is not an easy time to be a Christian, much like Crete in the 1st century AD.

We live in a dangerous time in our world's history. Evil is increasing in power and influence every day. It is hostile to the goodness of God and His people. As Jesus told His disciples — “If the world hates you, you know that it hated Me before *it hated* you. If you were of the world, the world would love its own. Yet because you are not of the world, but I chose you out of the world, therefore the world hates you.” (John 15:18-19)

It teaches us to say 'No' to ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright and godly lives in this present age. NIV

It teaches us to reject ungodliness and worldly (immoral) desires, and to live sensible, upright, and godly lives [lives with

a purpose that reflect spiritual maturity] in this present age.

AMP

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

... instructing us to deny godlessness and worldly lusts and to live in a sensible, righteous, and godly way in the present age.

CSB

No matter how Titus 2:12 is translated in English, we receive the same message. Christians must learn how to say **no** to ungodliness and worldly lusts and **yes** to living soberly, righteously and godly in this present age. We Must.

Titus 2:11-15

For the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men, teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in the present age, looking for the blessed hope and glorious appearing of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ, who gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us from every lawless deed and purify for Himself His own special people, zealous for good works. Speak these things, exhort, and rebuke with all authority. Let no one despise you.

We want to investigate what Christians should look for in this next part of our study. Paul gives us that information in verses 13 and 14 ..

... looking for the blessed hope and glorious appearing of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ, who gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us from every lawless deed and purify for Himself His own special people, zealous for good works.

The word “looking” comes from the Greek *prosdechomenoi*, which means “to receive to oneself, wait actively and expectantly, look .” This follows immediately after Paul’s statement about living “godly in the present age.” Even as we are focused on how to live in this present age, Paul calls on Christians to be waiting actively and expectantly for the “blessed hope and glorious appearing of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ.”

“The verb has an atmosphere of expectancy about it, and a readiness to welcome the person looked for and expected.”
Kenneth Wuest, Word Studies In The Pastor Epistles, Wm B. Eerdmans Publishing, 1952

The Greek for “blessed hope” is *makarian elpida*. The word *makarian* means “happy, blessed, in an enviable position.” The word *elpida* means “confident expectation, trust.”

The word *kai* (and) used in “hope and glorious appearing” is important to note. It’s used as “an epexegetical kai, thus defining ‘the blessed hope’ as being ‘the glorious appearing’ (Thomas Lea (2012). New American Commentary Vol. 34: 1, 2 Timothy, Titus, B&H Publishing Group). Wuest and other Greek scholars point to Granville Sharp’s rule .. “which says that when there are two nouns

in the same case connected by *kai* (and), the first noun having the article, the second noun not having the article, the second noun refers to the same thing the first noun does and is a further description of it.” Wuest translates the verse portion as “that blessed hope, even the appearing of the glory of our great God and Saviour, Jesus Christ.”

The words “glorious appearing” are *epiphaneian tēs doxēs* (the appearing of the glory). The word *epiphaneian* means “fitting manifestation.” You have probably heard the transliteration of the word into English as “epiphany.” The pagan Greeks used the word for the glorious manifestation of their gods. Paul used the word to describe the “appearing of the glory” of Jesus Christ. That is what Christians are waiting to see .. Jesus in all His glory!

This appearing of the glory is attached to what looks like two names, but is really one Name: “our great God and Savior Jesus Christ.” The Granville Sharp’s rule for Greek grammar also impacts the reading here. Paul is referencing Jesus Christ as “our great God and Savior.” The phrase *tou megalou Theou kai Sōtēros* (of the great God and Savior) includes the one definite article before the first noun, followed by *kai* (and) without the definite article before the second noun. Christ Jesus (*Christou Iēsou*) is both God and Savior.

Using the word “great” for God is reminiscent of Old Testament references to God:

For the Lord your God is God of gods and Lord of lords, the great God, mighty and awesome, who shows no partiality nor takes a bribe. Deuteronomy 10:17

Great is the Lord, and greatly to be praised In the city of our God, In His holy mountain. Psalm 48:1

Cry out and shout, O inhabitant of Zion, For great is the Holy One of Israel in your midst! Isaiah 12:6

You show lovingkindness to thousands, and repay the iniquity of the fathers into the bosom of their children after them—the Great, the Mighty God, whose name is the Lord of hosts. Jeremiah 32:18

Inasmuch as you saw that the stone was cut out of the mountain without hands, and that it broke in pieces the iron, the bronze, the clay, the silver, and the gold—the great God has made known to the king what will come to pass after this. The dream is certain, and its interpretation is sure. Daniel 2:45

Jesus Christ is our Great God and our Savior, “who gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us from every lawless deed and purify for Himself *His* own special people, zealous for good works.” This continues Paul’s theme in this paragraph that began with “For the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men.” The salvation that has appeared to all men is because Jesus “gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us from every lawless deed and purify for Himself *His* own special people, zealous for good works.” That is why Christians should deny ungodliness and worldly lusts and live soberly, righteously and godly in this present age.

Jesus Christ:

- gave Himself for us
- that He might redeem us
- from every lawless deed
- and purify for Himself His own special people
- zealous for good works

The word “purify” is *katharisē* and means “to cleanse, make clean, make pure.” That is a strong theme throughout Scripture and it what the Lord Jesus has done for His people through His death:

Not with the blood of goats and calves, but with His own blood He entered the Most Holy Place once for all, having obtained eternal redemption. For if the blood of bulls and goats and the ashes of a heifer, sprinkling the unclean, sanctifies for the purifying of the flesh, how much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without spot to God, cleanse your conscience from dead works to serve the living God? HEBREWS 9:12-14

In light of all that Jesus did for His people, is it any wonder that Paul would call on Christians to:

- deny ungodliness and worldly lusts
- live soberly, righteously, and godly in the present age

It should be no wonder at all. Christ has redeemed us from every lawless deed and has purified us for Himself. Out of that special relationship comes our zealousness for good works. The word “zealous” is *zēlōtēn* and means that we “boil over with passion.” We are “deeply committed.” We are “enthusiastic.” Thus the word “zealot” for a person who feels deeply about a cause. Interestingly, the word comes from *zēloó* which means “jealous.” It means “to bubble over because *so hot*.” The idea is of burning with zeal. To burn with zeal is to be jealous for something or someone. In our context, Paul wrote that Christians should be “zealous for good works.”

I am reminded of Paul’s famous words to the Ephesians:

For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, not of works, lest anyone should boast. For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them. EPHESIANS 2:8-10

We are saved by grace through faith and not by works. However, we are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand (in eternity) that we should do them (walk in them). Once we understand that Jesus did everything for us through His death and resurrection and that our salvation depends on Him alone, we should become zealous for the good works God prepared beforehand for us to do.

Our Blessed Hope

God is a rewarder of those who belong to Him. He calls on His people to do some difficult things in a difficult world (e.g. living righteously and godly in an unrighteous and ungodly world), but He also rewards us for doing those things. Whatever difficult time you are going through as a Christian right now does not compare with what God has for you in the future.

For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us. ROMANS 8:18

It's interesting that Paul used the word "glory" in Romans 8 even as he did in Titus 2. Christians have a special "glory" (*doxa*) awaiting them in Heaven. Waiting expectantly for the appearing of the glory of Christ includes our own glory in Christ.

This is truly a "blessed hope" that we have in Christ Jesus and a powerful reason for us to 'live Christian' in the present age. We are blessed "with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly *places* in Christ" (Ephesians 1:3).

Speak These Things

Speak these things, exhort, and rebuke with all authority. Let no one despise you. TITUS 2:15

Paul then wrote Titus to do four things:

- speak these things
- exhort
- rebuke with all authority
- let no one despise you

Paul knew from his experience as an apostle and a preacher of the Gospel on Crete that Titus would face opposition to his ministry. That opposition can often be fierce. Let's look at those four things from the Greek:

Tauta lalei .. these things speak .. the word "speak" means to be talkative (chatter) .. Christians need to talk about these things with family, friends and people they meet along the way. It needs to be natural part of our conversation. 'Living Christian' means that your identity as a follower of Jesus Christ is known by other people.

kai parakalei .. the word “exhort” means “to call to or for, to exhort, to encourage” .. it comes from two words that mean “close beside” .. Paul wanted Titus to be close to people and call to them to obey the words of God. The word *parakalei* is similar to the word Jesus used for the Holy Spirit (*paraklétos* – helper, comforter) – “But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all things that I said to you.” (John 14:26) Paul wanted Titus to be helper, a comforter to Christians on Crete.

kai elenche meta pasēs epitagēs .. the word “rebuke” means “to expose, convict, reprove.” It is a strong word and demonstrates the process Paul gave Titus. First, talk. Second, exhort. Third, rebuke. That should also be our process in talking with people. We begin by talking, chattering, with people on a regular basis. We get to know them and they get to know us. That’s the top level of communication. Exhortation goes a layer deeper. Now we’re coming close to someone and giving them encouragement and guidance. Rebuking is a much deeper level. We are exposing someone’s guilt and convicting and reproofing them of their sin against God.

mēdeis sou periphronēitō .. “No one you let despise.” Paul knew that the type of ministry he was recommending to Titus would cause problems for the young preacher and it was important that Titus not allow people to “despise” him for it. The word “despise” is *periphronēitō* and means “examine on all sides, look down upon, to despise.” The reason for that was not because it might hurt Titus’ feelings, but because Titus was preaching the Gospel of Jesus Christ. ‘Living Christian’ in this present age is not about us. It is about our representing Christ and preaching His Gospel. Whether people like us or not is of little importance. What is important is that they respect Christ and His teachings. That’s why Paul did not want Titus to let anyone despise him for his ministry of speaking, exhorting and rebuking. Titus was doing all of that in the “authority” (*epitagēs* – command fitting to the occasion) given him by the Apostle Paul and Jesus Christ.

This is similar to what Paul wrote to Timothy: “These things command and teach. Let no one despise your youth” (1 Timothy 4:11-12).

Paul told Titus to remind Christians about several important things and we'll look at those in the next part of our special series, *Living Christian in the Present World*.

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