

Titus 2:11-15

"The Life Lesson Of Grace"

There's no escaping it, the bible is a book that *tells us* how to live... That's the lesson we were looking into in our last gathering. Of course we acknowledge that it would seem to be the pinnacle of hypocrisy to state that we believe that the bible is the infallible, inerrant, unfailing Word of God, (containing truth from cover to cover) but then ignore it's instructions for our lives. Yes? ... So if the bible does in fact contain the incorruptible, incomparable & all-powerful word of God, we do well to eagerly receive it & readily obey it. Do we agree?

Now check it out; perhaps you're thinking. "I agree w/you Jeff, but how am I supposed to do that? I mean, that's a pretty tall order don't ya think?" Well that's one of the great things about the word of God. Not only does God *tell* us how we're to live, but He also *supplies the means* by which we're to live that way. He doesn't just saying, "Live like 'this', now go figure it out." If He calls you He'll equip you, if He enlists you He will enable you. He takes us & trains us, teaches us how to lead the life He's called us to in true holiness & righteousness & godliness.

If you weren't here last week I would encourage you to grab the cd, or perhaps download the mp3 on Sermonaudio.com (grab the app or whatever). Because through the apostle Paul the Holy Spirit gives to us (in the 1st 10 Vs of Titus Ch 2) a detailed description of what our lives are to look like as older men, older women, younger women or younger men of God. How we're to handle ourselves in the work place & the respect we're to issue our employers... The purpose of all of it being to bring glory to J.C. that our light would "so shine" that men might see our good works & glorify our Father who is in heaven.

There is a "missions" type mindset behind all that we do... "that the word of God may not be blasphemed, that one who is an opponent may be ashamed, having nothing evil to say of us; & that we might adorn the doctrine of God our Savior in *all* things." God wants our lives to impact that people around us in a way *not* that deters them *from* Him, but rather draws them *to* Him. There is a *missions* aspect to the way we're to lead our lives.

God gives us the mandate (that is, tell us how to live), but be encouraged, He also supplies the means...

Vs 11

The word "for", here in Vs 11 suggest to us that we're moving into the theological foundation for everything we just learned in the 1st 10 vs.

In Vs 1-10 we get the “What” we’re to do & we get the “Why” we’re to do it. Here we’re beginning to grasp the “How”. & What we’re gonna discover is that it’s through God’s grace that we’re taken & trained, equipped & empowered through His Spirit to lead lives of practical holiness & righteousness. You see, 1st Paul establishes that *salvation* comes through God’s grace, but the application of God’s grace isn’t limited to *salvation*, or *justification*, it’s also instrumental in our *sanctification* as well. In our spiritual growth & development as we’re brought into maturity as men/women of God.

“For the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men.” Again we notice what it is that has brought salvation to all men; it’s God’s grace. What does that mean? It means that both the initiative & the sum total of the work is of God. *We can’t earn it, we weren’t looking for it, we couldn’t somehow live a life good enough to save ourselves, God did the whole thing. Freely & w/out cost to us, He paid the bill in full w/complete understanding that we could never pay Him back.* In the book of Eph we read it like this, *“For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God,”*¹ It was Christ who “gave Himself” (as we’ll see in Vs 14) for us. Peter said of Jesus, *“who Himself bore our sins in His own body on the tree”*² *Salvation is of the Lord; it’s not the result of our works, but of His grace.*

Notice as well that God’s grace *brings* salvation. I mentioned it a moment ago; salvation isn’t something that we went looking for. We all like sheep had gone astray. We were all about doing things our own way, but God brought salvation *to us*. It “appeared” to us via the life, death, resurrection & exaltation of J.C.

This word “appeared” is the word “epiphany”, it speaks of a “shining forth”, like a ray of light piercing the darkness J.C. came to this earth. Of course Jesus said, *“I am the light of the world. He who follows Me shall not walk in darkness, but have the light of life.”*³ Paul told the Ephesians, *“For you were once darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Walk as children of light.”*⁴

Jesus is the manifestation of God’s salvation, which has appeared (notice) to *all* men. There is once gospel of grace for all mankind, it’s not one message for these people, another message for those people. It’s one message offered indiscriminately for all of mankind & here it is; you have sinned, & by your sin you have offended the One true living God who created the heavens & the earth & all the things contained therein.

¹ The New King James Version. (1982). (Eph 2:8). Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

² The New King James Version. (1982). (1 Pe 2:24). Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

³ The New King James Version. (1982). (Jn 8:12). Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

⁴ The New King James Version. (1982). (Eph 5:8). Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

Yet He has loved you w/an everlasting love & therefore He sent J.C. His only begotten Son to pay the penalty of your sin. The wages of sin is death & though Jesus *never* sinned He became sin for us that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him. Jesus hung on a cross, shed His blood & died for you, He was buried & 3 days later He rose again proving every claim He ever made of Himself not the least of which was that He was God in the flesh. Now if you will believe upon Him, you will be forgiven of all of your sin, His righteousness will be imputed to you & you will be reconciled to God & receive the free gift of everlasting life. How does that sound? It has *nothing* to do with you, it has everything to do w/Him.

This is the message that goes out to all of mankind, all men, there is a universal need & God provided a universal solution in J.C. to all who will believe. Isaiah 45:22, **“Look to Me, and be saved, All you ends of the earth! For I am God, and there is no other.”**⁵ God desires all men everywhere to be saved & to come to the knowledge of the truth.

Vs 11-13

So we see in this passage the grace of God in the past, present & prophetic tense. As for the *past*, it takes us to the cross. God’s grace “has” (past tense) appeared, bringing salvation to mankind through the death burial, resurrection & exaltation of J.C.

As for the *present* we learn here that the saving economy of God is instructive. God’s grace, at its grass roots level serves as an *instructor* in our lives. It teaches us, trains us, educates us & communicates to us God’s direction for our lives.

Vs 12 tells us that God’s grace “teaches” us. The word for “teaching” here is really a word that speaks of disciplining, or chastising. When it comes to being educated on living a godly life it’s seldom a painless procedure. Why? Because: God’s discipline involves the correction of human behavior, which *by nature* stands in *opposition* to Him. Leave the book of Titus; turn to **Hebrews 12** (Vs 3-11).

The teaching/training process can be very *painful*, however the fruit of righteousness that it yields is very *peaceable*. So understand that God’s grace isn’t a *passive* thing. Waiting around on us to sin so that it can cover/cleanse us; but rather it’s very *active* in our lives (teaching us, training us).

In what capacity? That, denying ungodliness & worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously & godly in the present age. The training of God’s grace in our lives is stated in both a negative & a positive manner.

⁵ The New King James Version. (1982). [Is 45:22]. Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

To the negative God's grace teaches us to say "No" to the things of the flesh, the lusts of this world. "Denying ungodliness & worldly lusts." We could stay here all day... Jesus said, "If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow Me."⁶ Paul said that like this, "And those who are Christ's have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit."⁷ & Again, "For God did not call us to uncleanness, but in holiness."⁸

There is to be a conscious, willful repudiation of thoughts, words, & actions that are opposed to true godliness. A renunciation of the values derived from this present world's system. God's grace will make ethical demands of His children that are consistent w/His nature. Charles Spurgeon once said in regard to young men (though I'm sure it's applicable to all), "The most difficult part of the training of young men is not to put the right thing into them, but to get the wrong thing out of them." We're to deny ungodliness, the lusts of the flesh, the lusts of the eyes & the pride of life, the values of this world.

To the positive, God's grace teaches us to live soberly, righteously, & godly in the present age. We spent time last week developing this word "soberly" it's our word that speaks of self-control, clarity of mind, sound-ness of judgment. Our lives should be earmarked by these characteristics as believers... "Righteously" speaks of our relationship to other people, we should be characterized by doing right by others. Of course, "godly" speaks to our relationship w/God, our lives should reverence the Lord & that's something that should be notable. Do we have devotions, do we obey the word, do we spend time in fellowship, do we serve the body of Christ? Not out of a sense of legalism, but out of love & submission to the One who has loved you & give Himself for you...

We also might draw attention real quick to this phrase, "...in the present age". These are the things that need to be happening in our lives right now, today. We live *in* this age, but not *for* this age. We're *in* the world but not *of* the world because God has called you *out* of the world; & even though you're living *in* this age, you're to be looking forward to a future age/better age to come, notice.

Vs 13

Now we're entering the *prophetic* tense, yes? The next major event on the Christian calendar is the return of J.C. for His bride A.K.A. "the church". While we live in the *present age*, we're looking forward to the blessed hope & glorious appearing of J.C.

⁶ The New King James Version. (1982). (Lk 9:23). Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

⁷ The New King James Version. (1982). (Ga 5:24-25). Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

⁸ The New King James Version. (1982). (1 Th 4:7). Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

What starts w/grace will lead to glory... You guys this is such a key when it comes to the transforming work of grace in our lives. The expectancy of Christ's return yields a purifying effect in our lives. We won't go there but write it down, look it up later Matt 24:45-51. What you'll discover is that the one who expects his master's return is about his master's business. The one who thinks it's not going to happen soon begins to grow wanton & worldly, carnal in his habits & is caught off guard... We're to live in constant expectancy of the return of Christ, it will purify your life. John said, *"Beloved, now we are children of God; and it has not yet been revealed what we shall be, but we know that when He is revealed, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is. And everyone who has this hope in Him purifies himself, just as He is pure."*⁹ What hope? The hope of seeing Jesus face to face.

Now we've spoken recently of the biblical understanding of "hope". It's not a wish w/a slight chance for failure. It's a guaranteed certainty, a concrete reality. "The blessed hope & glorious appearing (our word epiphany again) of our great God & Savior J.C."

Now if you're thinking to yourself that it sounds a lot like Paul is calling Jesus "God" in that phrase... that's because *he is*. Listen you guys, be assured once & for all that the bible makes the deity of J.C. very, very, undoubtedly clear. (Matt 1:23, John 20:28-29, Rom 9:5, Heb 1:8, 2 Pet 1:1)

Jesus established His deity through His supernatural birth, His sinless life, the fulfillment of hundreds & hundreds of OT prophecies (everyone of them which concerned the Messiah's 1st coming & He will fulfill those dealing w/His 2nd coming), He demonstrated power/authority over nature, over disease, over demons, over death. He demonstrated His authority to forgive sin, said that He would judge the sinner, He raised Himself from the dead & was exalted into heaven (in front of eye witnesses)... It's hard to make it much clearer, J.C. is our great *God* & Savior!

Vs 14

The "what" the "why" the negative & the positive, it's all here... "who gave Himself for us" there's not one aspect of this phrase that isn't important to use. This is the "what", Jesus "gave Himself for us". 1st of all we note that He "gave" which tells us that what He did, He did voluntarily. 2^{ndly} we note that He gave "Himself" which is to say He gave all that He could give.

⁹ The New King James Version. (1982). [1 Jn 3:2-3]. Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

3^{rdly} we note that He gave Himself “for us” which means what He did, He did vicariously, He gave Himself as a substitute, a “stand in” for sinful man (namely you & me).

Why? “that He might *redeem us* from every *lawless deed* (to the negative) & *purify* for Himself His own special people, *zealous for good works* (to the positive). This word “redeem” means to set free by paying a price, the price being the shedding of His blood, His death on our behalf. It’s what Jesus was talking about when He said, *“For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many.”*¹⁰ Peter said that like this, *“...knowing that you were not redeemed with corruptible things, like silver or gold, from your aimless conduct received by tradition from your fathers, but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot.”*¹¹

Jesus gave Himself for us, in order to redeem us from every lawless deed (translation, saving grace changes our lives) “purifies” for Himself His own special people. This is telling us that God’s plan didn’t end when you were saved; it’s just getting started, His plan for you, His purpose in you is that you would be (the word is) *zealous* for good works. James said, *“Show me your faith without your works, and I will show you my faith by my works.”*¹² If God’s saving grace has been unleashed in your life, it won’t *hide* itself, it will *evidence* itself through good works in your life. Paul put it like this, *“For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them.”*¹³

The heart of Christ is that we would be *zealous* for good works. It’s easy to have a zeal for good works in the life of someone else, or righteousness in the life of another (how we think they should live & what we think they should do). The word of God exhorts us to be zealous for the righteousness of Christ at work in our own lives & that we should be about good works *personally* prior to concerning ourselves w/what works in the lives of others should be.

Vs 15

Titus you’re speaking words of life, the word of God. Do so w/the authority that comes from God. “Speak these things, exhort & rebuke w/all authority. Let no one despise you.” Paul told Timothy, “Let no one despise *your youth*” evidently Titus was a little older than Timothy but the message remains.

¹⁰ *The New King James Version*. (1982). (Mk 10:45). Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

¹¹ *The New King James Version*. (1982). (1 Pe 1:18–19). Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

¹² *The New King James Version*. (1982). (Jas 2:18). Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

¹³ *The New King James Version*. (1982). (Eph 2:10). Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

Lead a life that gives evidence of what you teach; be a man of integrity, honor God personally & it will give credibility, authority to what you have to say. If God's grace isn't at work in my own life, how then can I exhort you & proclaim its power toward you?

It's the life lesson of God's grace, not what we can do for God, but an appropriate response to what God has done (& will do) for us in the Person of J.C. As we look back & consider the cross & look ahead to the coming of Christ, these 2 points help to balance us in our current Christian walk.

Give way to the work of God's grace in your life, don't resist it, receive it & God will use your life to bring glory to His name. Amen? Amen.

(The 1st work of God's grace toward us is to lead us to J.C. that we might be saved. It's by *grace* that we're saved, through faith. God is ready to forgive you of all of your sin if you're ready to turn from it & trust in Him. Jesus died for you & for me, that we might live forever w/Him & if you will believe on the Lord J.C. you will be saved.)

Prayer Points:

God we're so grateful for Your grace, Your mercy & Your love. For in Your love you have sent J.C. & by Your grace You have saved us, You are merciful & full of compassion & we give You praise. You are worthy of all power & all praise. Help us to submit fully to You, that we give way to the work of Your grace that You might be glorified in our lives.