

## Grace Appearing in this World

### Discussion Guide for Titus 2:11-15

**Grace-n.** divine favor freely bestowed on people

If there is any distinctive characteristic that should define the Christian life, it is grace.

We have been given a gift that is more precious than all of the riches and jewels that exist in the entire world. God has looked with favor on us, not because we have earned it, but because he has chosen to love, save, and bless us.

One of my youth pastors used to say every week that God has “spoiled him rotten.” He still says the same thing 20 years later.

Every Christian ought to feel treated like a royal prince or princess by a heavenly daddy who sits on the throne of the entire world.

“you are not lacking in any gift, as you wait for the revealing of our Lord Jesus Christ.”  
1 Corinthians 1:7

Grace is a theme throughout the entire scope of the Bible. Its first use is in Genesis 4 where God looked favorably upon Abel and his sacrifice. Every subsequent hero of faith is said to have found God’s favor in one form or another. Grace should be the longing of every heart that belongs to God.

Titus 2:11 tells us that the grace of God has appeared. The Message says “God’s readiness to give and forgive is now public.”

Grace is not a concept unique to the New Testament. It simply never finds an expression that is more complete and public than the cross of Jesus.

If God’s purpose is to bring salvation to all people, then our lives ought to be swallowed up in grace. Our very being should reflect grace so that people will want to pursue it.

The Church is the single group of people on earth whose entire identity is wrapped up in the grace of God. Unfortunately, Christians are often described as anything but graceful. How many churches have reputations as petty, vindictive, closed-minded, hateful, unfriendly, judgmental, harsh, greedy, or mean?

Titus 2:12-14 tell us that this is reputation is completely wrong.

“...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.”

God is making us (the Church) into a nation who are known to belong to Him because we are “zealous for good works.” Our behavior today is should be a glimpse of what the behavior of people will be in heaven. Eugene Peterson in *The Message* phrases verse 13 this way:

“this new life is starting right now, and is whetting our appetites for the glorious day when our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ appears.”

The world understands this. When people say they won't become Christians because of the way Christians act, they're really saying they don't want the version of heaven we reflect. And who can blame them?

Our job is to show people what heaven is like. Are we preaching a gospel of grace or one that is false?

### Discussion Questions

- How has God spoiled you rotten this week?
- What kinds of attitudes reflect grace?
- Fill in the blank: Christians are at their best when they \_\_\_\_\_?
- What activities of our church reflect the future appearing of Jesus?
- What activities of your family reflect the future appearing of Jesus?
- If someone looked at your life for a day, would she be convinced that Jesus is returning?
- How will you know when you are “zealous for good works?”