

# Abounding Grace Christian Church

## The Epistle of Paul to Titus – Part 5

### I. Exposition of Chapter Two (Continued).

A. Verses 9-10 – “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.”

1. The word “**bondservants**” was also found in 1:1 where Paul refers to himself as “...a **bondservant of God**...”. In contrast to the spiritual slavery which Paul refers to, here it is used literally and means; “**pertaining to a state of being completely controlled by someone or something—‘subservient to, controlled by.’**”<sup>1</sup> So, Paul is referring to those who were born slaves under a master but have become believers in Christ. Slaves made up a large part of the congregations of that day. It was not typically like the slavery which took place in the United States during the 19<sup>th</sup> century. As an example, Paul Copan writes:

“During the first century AD, 85 to 90 percent of Rome’s population consisted of slaves. Although slaves were considered their masters’ property and didn’t have *legal* rights, they did have quite a range of other rights and privileges. These included (1) the possibility of starting a business to earn potentially large sums of money, (2) the capability of earning money to eventually purchase freedom (manumission) from their masters, or (3) the right to own property (known as the *peculium*). The work of slaves covered the spectrum from horrid conditions in mines to artisans, business agents, and other positions of respect and prestige such as civil or imperial servants. So slavery wasn’t unkind to *all* slaves in the Roman Empire.”<sup>2</sup>

2. “...to be obedient to their own masters...” – The word “**obedient**” means; “to arrange under, to subordinate; to subject, put in subjection”<sup>3</sup>

3. “...to be well pleasing in all things...” – This is self-explanatory. Dr. Bob Utley adds:

“The unstated, but implied, meaning is not only to the slave owners, but supremely to God (cf. Rom. 12:1–2; Eph. 6:7–8).”<sup>4</sup>

4. “...not answering back...” – “speak against something or someone—‘to oppose, to speak in opposition to.’”<sup>5</sup>

5. “...not pilfering...” – “to misappropriate funds for one’s own benefit—‘to misappropriate funds for oneself, to embezzle.’”<sup>6</sup>

6. “...showing all good fidelity...” – “good faith, trustworthiness, faithfulness, honesty”<sup>7</sup>

7. “...that they may adorn the doctrine of God our Savior in all things.” – The word “**adorn**” means; “**beautify, make attractive, decorate, dress, put in order**”<sup>8</sup> This means, if they behave this way toward their masters, they will make the “**doctrine**” (teaching) of God’s Word attractive. Dr. Warren Wiersbe writes:

“Paul gave a good reason why Christian workers should be trustworthy (‘showing all good fidelity’): This will ‘embellish with honor’ the Word of God (WUEST). When we serve faithfully, we ‘beautify the Bible’ and make the Christian message attractive to unbelievers. When Paul addressed the slaves in Timothy’s church (1 Tim. 6:1), he used a negative motive: ‘that the name of God and His doctrine be not blasphemed.’ But the positive motive, to make God’s message attractive, and the negative motive, to keep God’s teaching from being slandered, ought to control our lives.”<sup>9</sup>

a. “...God our Savior...” – In Part 2 of this series, it was brought out that the word “**Savior**” is found six times in this letter (1:3; 1:4; 2:10; 2:13; 3:4; 3:6). It means; “**one who rescues or saves**”<sup>10</sup> God, through Jesus Christ, has rescued or saved us from Satan and sin (cf. Romans 6:5-6, 14, 22; Colossians 1:13).

B. Verses 11-12 – “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,”

1. “For the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men...” – The phrase “...grace of

<sup>1</sup> Johannes P. Louw and Eugene Albert Nida, *Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament: Based on Semantic Domains* (New York: United Bible Societies, 1996), 471.

<sup>2</sup> Paul Copan, *Is God a Moral Monster? Making Sense of the Old Testament God* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2011), 151.

<sup>3</sup> Joseph Henry Thayer, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament: Being Grimm’s Wilke’s Clavis Novi Testamenti* (New York: Harper & Brothers., 1889), 645.

<sup>4</sup> Robert James Utley, *Paul’s Fourth Missionary Journey: I Timothy, Titus, II Timothy*, vol. Volume 9, Study Guide Commentary Series (Marshall, Texas: Bible Lessons International, 2000), 109.

<sup>5</sup> Louw and Nida, 439.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, 584.

<sup>7</sup> H.G. Liddell, *A Lexicon: Abridged from Liddell and Scott’s Greek-English Lexicon* (Oak Harbor, WA: Logos Research Systems, Inc., 1996), 641.

<sup>8</sup> James Swanson, *Dictionary of Biblical Languages with Semantic Domains: Greek (New Testament)* (Oak Harbor: Logos Research Systems, Inc., 1997).

<sup>9</sup> Warren W. Wiersbe, *The Bible Exposition Commentary*, vol. 2 (Wheaton, IL: Victor Books, 1996), 266.

<sup>10</sup> Louw and Nida, 240.

God...”, could be said to be the theme of the New Testament. The word “grace” can be defined as: “a favorable attitude toward someone or something—favor, good will.”<sup>11</sup> Other definitions include the word “kindness.” This goes along with the idea of “graciousness” being a part of the meaning of “grace.” God’s graciousness, kindness and favorable attitude toward us, has made available “salvation.” The word “appeared” means; “to cause light to shine upon some object, in the sense of illuminating it”<sup>12</sup> This means that God’s grace has shown up to make available salvation to all people. Of course, all people need to receive salvation through the grace of God. Dr. Utley writes: “The following passages reflect the universal scope of Christ’s work: (1) ‘for the world’ (John 1:29; 3:16; 6:33, 51; 2 Cor. 5:19; 1 John 2:2) and (2) ‘all men’ (Rom. 5:18; 1 Cor. 15:22; 1 Tim. 2:4–6; Heb. 2:9; 2 Pet. 3:9).”<sup>13</sup>

2. “...teaching us...” – “to provide instruction, with the intent of forming proper habits of behavior”<sup>14</sup>  
This is saying that the grace of God teaches us how to live right. The grace of God, active in our lives, empowers us to overcome sin. Andreas Köstenberger writes:

“God’s grace, rather than giving license to unbridled liberty, ‘teaches’ (...cf. 1Ti 1:10; 2Ti 2:25) us, first, ‘to say ‘No’...unlike the false teachers who deny God by their actions, 1:16...”<sup>15</sup>

3. Gary Leggett sums up the rest of verse 12 when he writes:

“The grace of God teaches that Christians should live differently. First, negatively, they deny or renounce ‘ungodliness’ (lack of reverence for God, godlessness). Second, they give up ‘worldly lusts’ (passions, desires). Positively, Christians live ‘soberly’ (self-controlled, prudently), ‘righteously’ (upright, justly), and ‘godly’ (reverently).”<sup>16</sup>

C. Verse 13 – “...looking for the blessed hope and glorious appearing of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ,...”

1. “...looking...” means; “wait for, anticipate a future event”<sup>17</sup>. Another word for this would be “expectation”.
2. “...the blessed hope...” – The word “blessed” means; “pertaining to being happy, with the implication of enjoying favorable circumstances”<sup>18</sup>. The word “hope” means; “to look forward with confidence to that which is good and beneficial”<sup>19</sup> As believers, we should be expecting with confidence the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ! In the context of verses 11-12, our attitude of expectant waiting will or should have a great effect on the way we are living.
3. “...glorious appearing or our great God and Savior Jesus Christ...” – The word “appearing” (noun) is a related word to “appeared” (verb) found in verse 11. The Bible makes it clear that Jesus is coming again a second time. (cf. Matthew 24:29-31; I Corinthians 15:51-54; I Thessalonians 4:13-18).

D. Verses 14-15 – “...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.”

1. “...who gave Himself for us...” – This speaks of His substitutionary work on the cross.
2. “...that He might redeem us...” – “redeem” means; “free someone by paying a ransom price (Lk 24:21; Tit 2:14; 1Pe 1:18; Ac 28:19)”<sup>20</sup>
3. “...from every lawless deed...” – Speaks of every sin which breaks God’s law.
4. “...and purify for Himself His own special people...” – The word “purify” means; “to free from the defilement of sin and from faults; to purify from wickedness”<sup>21</sup> Utley comments about “...His own special people.”

“a people for His own possession” This is OT covenant terminology (cf. Exod. 19:5; Deut. 14:2; 1 Pet. 2:5, 9, 10; Rev. 1:6)<sup>22</sup>

5. “...zealous for good works...” – “zealous” means; “most eagerly desirous of,”<sup>23</sup>
6. “Speak these things, and rebuke with all authority. Let no one despise you.” – The word “despise” means; “to invalidate the authority of, to reject, to disregard.”<sup>24</sup>

<sup>11</sup> Louw and Nida, 298.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid., 172.

<sup>13</sup> Utley, 111.

<sup>14</sup> Louw and Nida, 413.

<sup>15</sup> *The Expositor’s Bible Commentary*, 1 and 2 Timothy, Titus, Andreas Köstenberger, (Zondervan Publishing, 2006)

<sup>16</sup> *The Complete Biblical Library: Acts – Revelation, Volume 2*, (Empowered Life, Tulsa, OK, 2016.), 942.

<sup>17</sup> Swanson, *Dictionary of Biblical Languages with Semantic Domains: Greek (New Testament)* 1997).

<sup>18</sup> Louw and Nida, 301.

<sup>19</sup> Ibid., 295.

<sup>20</sup> Swanson, *Dictionary of Biblical Languages with Semantic Domains: Greek (New Testament)*

<sup>21</sup> Thayer, 312.

<sup>22</sup> Utley, 120.

<sup>23</sup> Thayer, 271.

<sup>24</sup> Louw and Nida, 682.