

Theme: Our great God and Savior appeared once to save and sanctify. He will appear again, revealing His glory, claiming His own precious possession. We wait and long for that day in grace and hope.

Background: Paul usually goes from doctrine to duty – from theological foundation to ethical implications or application. Here it is reversed.

Introduction: So much of our lives are characterized by "waiting." We tend to be very "this present age" minded as a result. As Christians we are to be waiting for something much more glorious and lasting than the things that usually occupy our thoughts in this life.

I. Grace for This Present Age

A. Grace in His appearing

1. Grace of God has appeared
 - a. An "epiphany" of God's unmerited mercy
 - b. Grace has been there all along (1 Peter 5:10)
 - c. Exhibited in many different ways
2. Grace is personified
 - a. It has taken on human form!
 - b. It appears visibly in Jesus Christ!
3. Personified Grace is our teacher

B. The Power of Grace

1. Salvation!
 - a. Salvation is by grace
 - 1.) NOTE: Who Christ is – and what He brings – are indissolubly connected.
 - 2.) Not "universalism" or "inclusivism"
 - 3.) But "exclusivism" (Acts 4:12)
 - b. For all people – Hallelujah! What a Savior!
2. Transformation!
 - a. Grace changes us
 - 1.) We are saved to a new life in Christ
 - 2.) NOTE: Salvation and changed life are inseparable! One leads most assuredly to the other.
 - b. Grace trains us to recognize sin and forsake it.
3. Saying "NO" – Renouncing (to forsake on an on-going basis):
 - a. Ungodliness: Anything in me that does not reflect the character, beauty, honor, glory of the Savior
 - b. Worldly passions: Sexual sins and much more
 - c. NOTE: We don't say "no" to earn God's favor but to be rid of the stain and taste of sin.
4. Saying "YES" – On an on-going basis
 - a. Self-control: In contrast to ungodliness, lack of control
 - b. Upright: Not pursuing worldly passions, but righteousness (NOTE: This is not a righteousness through law keeping.)
 - c. Godliness
 - 1.) Is found in dependence on God
 - 2.) In a relationship with God
5. Grace now! "In the present age" - Making our calling and election sure! (2 Peter 1:10)
NOTE: To what in your life do you need to be saying "NO" to right now? In what ways are you striving to say "YES"?

II. Grace for the Age to Come (vv. 13, 14)

A. The appearing of Glory

1. Our "blessed hope" - Points us to what the appearing of glory entails
 2. "Glory" - The epiphany of glory!
- B. The One Who will appear
1. Our great God and Savior Jesus Christ (the appearing of One, not two)
 2. Perhaps the most powerful assertion of Christ's divine nature
 3. NOTE: What we await is certain!
- C. The glory of salvation (v. 14) - (NOTE: Paul uses OT language and images from Israel's beginning.)
1. Purchased (redeemed) - Delivered out of slavery
 2. Purified (cleansed!) - No more sacrifices/washings that must be endlessly repeated (1 John 1:7)
 3. Possessed (His own possession)
 - a. At great personal cost
 - b. NOTE: God doesn't treat those who cost him so dearly with resentment, or diffidence. He takes them as His own treasured possession! (Exodus 19:5!)
 4. With a glorious purpose

III. Grace to Persevere

A. The "Imperatives"

1. Declare/say/speak - Refers to the whole
2. Exhort/encourage - See what God has done and how He has called you to live
3. Rebuke!
 - a. Turn us back from the ways we should not go
 - b. Correction, confrontation!
4. Stand firm (let no one despise or look down on you) - this work will always be necessary, it won't always be popular!

B. Our "Imperatives"

1. Are you waiting for peace in this life? It is not found apart from the grace of God.
2. Are you waiting for inspiration to live in uncompromised faith and obedience? You have been given all you need.
3. Are you waiting for more than this world and life have to offer? Then wait with those who long for their blessed hope, the epiphany of the glory of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ.