

INTRO: In our text, Paul is continuing the thought that he began in vs. 11 & 12: the saving grace of God. **What is it?** It is grace that saves and is richly bestowed. **What does it do?** It teaches us to say 'YES' to God and to all that is good and lovely. **In whom does this grace work?** Not in all people but in God's people out of every nation, tribe, and tongue, and from all classes of people. Now Paul goes on to point out that God's grace teaches us not only how to live in this present world, but it teaches us to look for the blessed hope.

I. *WHAT IS THAT HOPE?*

- A. It is one and the same as the appearing of the great God and our Savior Jesus Christ.
 - 1. It is the **Parousia**: word means 'presence'.
 - 2. It is the final, sudden, personal visible coming of Christ on the clouds of heaven.
 - 3. He will come for the purpose of raising the dead, executing judgment accord. To works, and making all things new.
 - 4. There is one coming of Christ throughout the ages, with different aspects, related as means to an end
 - 5. But it is especially Christ's coming at the end of the world (James 5:7) that is meant here.
- B. A "glorious appearing".
 - 1. We have a faulty translation here.
 - 2. The Apostle does not have in mind the glorious appearance of Christ as wonderful as that may be.
 - 3. Rather he is speaking of the glory of God and Christ which he will give to us when he appears!
 - 4. Salvation is the basis for the instruction that will follow.
- C. This is a blessed hope!
 - 1. This word 'hope' is not used now like we might use it today: anticipatory but uncertain, not sure. "I hope so."
 - 2. According to Scripture, hope is the anticipation of that which is real, absolutely certain.
 - 3. It is a blessed hope: a cause for happiness and joy, a cause for rejoicing.
 - 4. It is that which fills up, complements and satisfies what is still lacking in us.
 - 5. God's grace has already given us much. New life! But the final perfection of our salvation and glory is still coming.
- D. The glory that God in Christ prepares and will grant to us when Christ appears.
 - 1. It is the glory of God who is great! God purposes to give glory to us on the basis of Christ's merits.
 - 2. The glory God prepares for us is a reflection of his own. In principle we have it already.
 - 3. When Christ appears, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is (1 John 3:2).

II. *WHY DO WE HAVE THIS HOPE?*

- A. We have here in vs. 14 the ground or the basis for the glory that must be revealed with Christ's coming.
 - 1. This glory comes to us not because of our worth or because we are nice.
 - 2. The sole ground of our glory is the meritorious and saving work of our Savior, Jesus Christ!
 - 3. Jesus (Jehovah salvation) came down from heaven and gave himself to save his people from their sins.
 - 4. Christ (Anointed One) is appointed and qualified by God to save and represent us in the matter of our redemption.
 - 5. What a great redemption: he became sin that we might become the righteousness of God in him.
 - 6. He died in order that we might live!
- B. We have been given new life.
 - 1. We by grace are no longer slaves to sin, but servants of our Lord Jesus.
 - 2. We who have this hope purify ourselves as he is pure (1 John 3:3).
 - 3. The grace of God that has appeared teaches us how to live holy lives in this present evil world.
 - 4. The Lord Jesus sets before us this blessed hope as a reward given to those who love him and live for him.
- C. We have been made a people zealous of good works.
 - 1. Purchased and delivered from sin, remade so that inwardly we desire to live not to the world but to Christ.
 - 2. Paul uses the word "purify". We are eager to do good.
 - 3. If we live in an unworthy way, we pollute ourselves with the very sins that Jesus through his death purged us from!

III. *HOW DO WE CARRY OUT THIS ACTIVITY OF 'LOOKING' ?*

- A. The idea of 'looking'.
 - 1. Not idleness, sitting back, or laziness.
 - 2. Rather it is hope in anticipation. We know that the object we hope for is real, we expect to receive it, and long for it.
 - 3. Like a magnet this hope pulls us heavenward. We are attracted to the work of grace in our hearts.
 - 4. This looking is a constant activity that permeates all our relationships and callings and activities!
- B. God's grace teaches us to say "No"! The doctrine of the antithesis:
 - 1. "No" to ungodliness: Ungodliness is wanting to do nothing with God's laws for holy living.
 - 2. Our sinful flesh, the world that we live in, and the devil stand opposed and rebellious to God's laws.
 - 3. "No" to worldly lusts: cravings for what God forbids.
 - 4. Grace hates what is ugly, profane, and worldly.
- D. God's grace teaches us to say "Yes". Yes to doing what is good and pleasant and pleasing to God.
 - 1. "Yes" to living a sober controlled life, controlled by a sanctified mind and will.
 - 2. "Yes" to living righteously. We take God's law for our lives, our duty and our relationships and obey it.
 - 3. "Yes" to living godly, pious lives. This is our walk.
 - 4. In 1 Tim. 4:7, we are exhorted to exercise ourselves unto godliness. It does not just happen!
- D. What an incentive to holy living!
 - 1. Increased activity, willingness to do good, centered in Christ's coming.
 - 2. Keeping our eye on this so that we do not grow tired of following the right path. Jesus is coming with glory for us!