

Between His First and Second Coming
Titus 2:11-14

In this passage Paul stimulates us to holiness by describing ...

- I. Our Position – Between Two Appearances
- II. Our Instruction
 - a. Denying
 - b. Living
 - c. Looking
- III. Our Encouragements
 - a. Grace has come to the rescue
 - b. Another appearing is coming

Lead up to today's sermon

Shelf – “Sermons on the Last Days”

Charles Spurgeon preaching today.

His Title: The Two appearances and the discipline of Grace

My title: In between His First and Second Coming

Delivered at Metropolitan Tabernacle, April 4, 1886

Spurgeon a genius

3rd generation pastor, grew up in rural village, converted at 16 and immediately began preaching – preaching prodigy, attracted huge audiences

Reputation quickly spread from countryside to London

At 19 invited to Preach at New park street Chapel in London. 1854.
Less than 200 listeners

Within the year, 1200 seat church overflowing

Larger and larger venues until Metro Tabernacle completed. 6,000

Same pastorate from 19 to death at 57

Married, twin sons

Opened Pastor's College, trained more than 900

Opened orphanages, providing education

W/ wife, developed program to publish and distribute Christian literature

Most prolific writer in Christian church history

Said to have preached to 10 million in his lifetime

Every week his sermons sold more than 25,000 written copies, translated into 20 languages

No amplification, once preached to over 23,000

“He himself was the electrifying presence on the platform: he did not stand and simply read a stilted sermon. Spurgeon used an outline, developing his themes extemporaneously, and speaking “in common language to common people.”

His sermons were filled with stories and poetry, drama and emotion. He was larger than life, always in motion, striding back and forth across the stage. He gestured broadly, acted out stories, used humor and painted word pictures ... He was not tempted by fashion, be it theological, social or political ... He was an expositional preacher mostly.

As I read, listen carefully and you will hear the cadences of this remarkable preaching, the echoes of God’s timeless truth traveling across the years.

Hear the worship of a saved soul on fire for God
Hear the encouragement of a fellow brother in Christ
Hear the joy of a man redeemed from his sin
Hear the warnings and pleadings of Bible-saturated, Spirit-filled man of God

I was brought to tears more than once. I was struck by balance, thoroughness, use of Scripture and powerful application and priceless illustrations.

My Christmas gift to you this morning. We’ll post the whole text to web site.

READ TEXT: Titus 2:11-14 (p. 168 of NT in Pew Bible)

UPON reading this text, one sees at a glance that Paul believed in a Divine Savior. He did not preach a Savior who was a mere man. He believed the Lord Jesus Christ to be truly Man, but he also believed Him to be God over all and he, therefore, uses the striking words, “the glorious appearing of the great God and our Savior Jesus Christ.”

There is no appearing of God the Father—there is no such expression in Scripture! The appearing is the appearing of that second Person of the blessed Trinity in unity who has already once appeared and who will appear a second time without a sin offering unto salvation in the latter days.

Paul believed in Jesus as “the great God and our Savior.” It was his high delight to extol the Lord who once was crucified in weakness. He calls Him, here, “the great God,” thus specially dwelling upon His power, dominion and Glory. And this is the more remarkable because he immediately goes on to say, “who gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us from all iniquity.”

He who gave Himself. He who surrendered life, itself, upon the accursed tree. He who was stripped of all honor and Glory and entered into the utmost depths of humiliation was, assuredly, the great God notwithstanding all!

O Brothers, if you take away the Deity of Christ, what in the Gospel is left that is worth preaching? None but the great God is equal to the work of being our Savior!

We learn, also, at first sight, that Paul believed in a great redemption. “Who gave Himself for us that He might redeem us from all iniquity.” That word, “redemption,” sounds in my ears like a silver bell!

We are ransomed, purchased back from slavery and this at an immeasurable price—not merely by the *obedience* of Christ, nor the *suffering* of Christ, nor even the *death* of Christ, but by Christ’s giving *Himself* for us. All that there is in the great God and Savior was paid down that He might “redeem us from all iniquity.” The splendor of the Gospel lies in the redeeming Sacrifice of the Son of God and we shall never fail to put this to the front in our preaching!

It is the gem of all the Gospel gems! As the moon is among the stars, so is this great doctrine among all the lesser lights which God has kindled to make glad the night of fallen man! Paul never hesitates—he has a Divine Savior and a Divine redemption—and he preaches these with unwavering confidence. Oh that all preachers were like Paul!

It is also clear that Paul looked upon the appearing of the Savior as a Redeemer from all iniquity as a display of the Grace of God. He says, “The Grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men.” In the Person of Christ, the Grace of God is revealed, as when the sun rises and makes glad all lands. It is not a *private* vision of God to a favored Prophet on the lone mountain’s brow, but it is an open declaration of the Grace of God to every creature under Heaven—a display of the Grace of God to all eyes that are open to behold it!

When the Lord Jesus Christ came to Bethlehem and when He closed a perfect life by death upon Calvary, He manifested the Grace of God more gloriously than has been done by creation or Providence. This is the clearest Revelation of the everlasting mercy of the living God!

In the Redeemer we behold the unveiling of the Father’s face. What if I say the laying bare of the Divine heart? To repeat the figure of the text, this is the dayspring from on high which has visited us. This is the Sun which has risen with healing in His wings. The Grace of God has conspicuously shone forth and made itself visible to men of every rank in the Person and work of the Lord Jesus. This was not given us because of anything deserved on our part—it is a manifestation of free, rich, undeserved Grace and of that Grace in its fullness!

The Grace of God has been made manifest to the entire universe in the appearing of Jesus Christ our Lord! The grand objective of the manifestation of Divine Grace in Christ Jesus is to deliver men from the dominion of evil.

The world in Paul’s day was sunk in immorality, debauchery, ungodliness, bloodshed and cruelty of every kind. I have not time, this morning, to give you, even, an outline of the Roman world when Paul wrote this letter to Titus. We are bad enough, now, but the outward manners and customs of that period were simply horrible! The spread of the Gospel has worked a change for the better.

In the Apostle's days the favorite spectacles for holiday entertainment were the slaughter of men—and such was the general depravity, that vices which we hardly dare to mention were defended and gloried in. In the midnight of the world's history, our Lord appeared to put away sin. The Lord Jesus Christ, who is the manifestation of the Divine Grace to men, came into the world to put an end to the unutterable tyranny of evil.

His work and teaching are meant to lift up mankind at large, but also to redeem His people from all iniquity and to sanctify them to Himself as His peculiar heritage. Paul looks upon recovery from sin as being a wonderful proof of Divine Grace. He does not talk about a kind of Grace that would leave men in sin and yet save them from its punishment. No, his salvation is *salvation from sin*. He does not talk about a Free Grace which winks at iniquity and makes nothing of transgression, but of a greater Grace by far— a Grace which denounces the iniquity and condemns the transgression—and then delivers the victim of it from the habit which has brought him into bondage. He declares that the Grace of God has shone upon the world, in the work of Jesus, in order that the darkness of its sin and ignorance may disappear and the brightness of holiness, righteousness and peace may rule the day.

God send us to see these blessed results in every part of the world! God make us to see them in ourselves!

May we feel that the Grace of God has appeared to us individually! Our Apostle would have Titus know that this Grace was intended for all ranks of men—for the Cretans who were “always liars, evil beasts, lazy gluttons”—and even for the most despised bond slaves who, under the Roman empire were treated worse than dogs. To each one of us, whether rich or poor, prominent or obscure, the Gospel has come and its design is that we may be delivered, by it, from all ungodliness and worldly lusts.

This being the run of the text, I ask you to come closer to it, while I try to show how the Apostle stimulates us to holiness and urges us to overcome all evil.

Firstly he describes *our position*. Secondly, he describes *our instruction*. And, thirdly, he mentions *our encouragements*. May the good Spirit bless our meditations at this hour!

I. First of all, the Apostle in this text describes OUR POSITION. The people of God stand between two appearances.

In the 11th verse he tells us, “The Grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men.” And then he says, in the 13th verse, “Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Savior Jesus Christ.” We live in an age which is an interval between two appearings of the Lord from Heaven. Believers in Jesus are shut off from the old economy by the first coming of our Lord. The times of man’s ignorance God winked at, but now He commands all men, everywhere, to repent.

We are divided from the past by a wall of light upon whose forefront we read the words, Bethlehem, Gethsemane and Calvary. We date from the birth of the Virgin’s Son—we begin with Anno Domini. All the rest of time is before Christ and is marked off from the Christian era. Bethlehem’s manger is our beginning. The chief landmark in all time to us is the wondrous life of Him who is the Light of the world! We look to the appearing of the Grace of God in the form of the lowly One of Nazareth, for our trust is there. We confide in Him who was made flesh and dwelt among us, so that men beheld His Glory, the Glory as of the Only Begotten of the Father, full of Grace and Truth.

The dense darkness of the heathen ages begins to be broken when we reach the first appearing—and the dawn of a glorious day begins!

Brothers and Sisters, we look forward to a second appearing! Our outlook for the close of this present era is another appearing—an appearing of Glory rather than of Grace. After our Master rose from the brow of Olivet, His disciples remained for a while in mute astonishment. But soon an angelic messenger reminded them of prophecy and promise by saying, “You men of Galilee, why do you stand gazing up into Heaven? This same Jesus, which is taken up from you into Heaven, shall so come in like manner as you have seen Him go into Heaven.”

We believe that our Lord, in the fullness of time, will descend from Heaven with a shout, with the trumpet of the archangel and the voice of God—

**“The Lord shall come! The earth shall quake!
The mountains to their center shake
And, withering from the vault of night,
The stars shall pale their feeble light.”**

This is the terminus of the present age. We look FROM Anno Domini, in which He came the first time, TO that greater Anno Domini, or year of our Lord, in which He shall come a second time, in all the splendor of His power, to reign in righteousness and break the evil powers as with a rod of iron!

See, then, where we are—we are compassed about, behind and before—with the appearings of our Lord.

Behind us is our trust. Before us is our hope.

Behind us is the Son of God in humiliation. Before us is the great God, our Savior, in His Glory.

To use an ecclesiastical term, we stand between two Epiphanies—the first is the manifestation of the Son of God in human flesh in dishonor and weakness. The second is the manifestation of the same Son of God in all His power and Glory! In what a position, then, do the saints stand! They have an era all to themselves which begins and ends with the Lord's appearing!

Our position is further described in the text, if you look at it, as being *in this present world, or age*. We are living in the age which lies between the two blazing beacons of the Divine appearings and we are called to hasten from one to the other. The sacramental host of God's elect is marching on from the one appearing to the other with hasty feet. We have everything to hope for in the *last* appearing, as we have everything to trust to in the *first* appearing—and we have now to wait with patient hope throughout that weary interval which intervenes!

Paul calls it, "this present world." This marks its fleeting nature. It is present, but it is scarcely future, for the Lord may come so soon and thus end it all. It is present, now, but it will not be present long. It is but a little time and He who will come shall come and will not tarry.

Now it is this "present world." Oh, how present it is! How sadly it surrounds us! Yet, by faith, we count these present things to be unsubstantial as a dream and we look to the things which are not seen and not present, as being real and eternal! We pass through this world as men on pilgrimage. We traverse an enemy's country.

Going from one manifestation to another, we are as birds migrating on the wing from one region to another—there is no rest for us by the way. We are to keep ourselves as loose as we can from this country through which we make our pilgrimage, for we are strangers and foreigners and here we have no continuing city.

We hurry through this Vanity Fair—before us lies the Celestial City and the coming of the Lord who is the King thereof! As voyagers cross the Atlantic and so pass from shore to shore, so do we speed over the waves of this ever-changing world to the Glory Land of the bright appearing of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ!

Already I have given to you, in this description of our position, the very best argument for a holy life. If it is so, my Brothers and Sisters, that you are not of the world, even as Jesus is not of the world. If this is so, that before you blazes the supernatural splendor of the Second Advent and behind you burns the everlasting light of the Redeemer's first appearing, what manner of people ought you to be?

If, indeed, you are but journeying through this present world, allow not your hearts to be defiled with its sins! Learn not the manner of speech of these aliens through whose country you are passing! Is it not written, "The people shall dwell alone, and shall not be reckoned among the nations"? "Come you out from among them and be you separate, touch not the unclean thing," for the Lord has said, "I will be a Father unto you and you shall be My sons and daughters."

They that lived before the coming of Christ had responsibilities, but not such as those which rest upon you who have seen the face of God in Jesus Christ and who expect to see that face again! You live in light which renders their brightest knowledge a comparative darkness! Walk as children of Light. You stand between two mornings between which there is no evening.

The Glory of the Lord has risen upon you, once, in the Incarnation and Atonement of your Lord—that Light is shining more and more—and soon there will come the perfect day which shall be ushered in by the Second coming. The sun shall no more go down, but it shall unveil itself and shed an indescribable splendor upon all hearts that look for it!

“Put on, therefore, the armor of light.” What a grand expression! Helmet of light, breastplate of light, shoes of light—everything of light!

What a knight must he be who is clad, not in steel, but in light! Light which shall flash confusion on his foes! There ought to be a holy light about you, O Believer in Jesus, for there is the appearing of Grace behind you and the appearing of Glory before you!

Two manifestations of God shine upon you. Like a wall of fire, the Lord’s appearings are round about you—there ought to be a special Glory of holiness in the midst. “Let your light so shine before men that they may see your good works and glorify your Father which is in Heaven.” That is the position of the righteous according to my text—and it furnishes a loud call to holiness.

II. Secondly, I have to call your attention to THE INSTRUCTION which is given to us by the Grace of God which has appeared unto all men. Our translation runs thus—“The Grace of God has appeared to all men, teaching us that denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously and godly in this present world.” A better translation would be, “The Grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men, disciplining us in order that we may deny ungodliness and worldly lusts.”

Those of you who know a little Greek will note that the word which, in our version, is rendered, “teaching,” is a scholastic term and has to do with the education of children—not merely the teaching, but the training and bringing of them up. The Grace of God has come to be a schoolmaster to us, to teach us, to train us, to prepare us for a more developed state. Christ has manifested in His own Person that wonderful Grace of God which is to deal with us as with sons, to educate us unto holiness and so to the full possession of our heavenly heritage.

We are the many sons who are to be brought to Glory by the discipline of Grace. So then, first of all, *Grace has a discipline*. We generally think of law when we talk about schoolmasters and discipline, but Grace, itself, has a discipline and a wonderful training power, too. The manifestation of Grace is preparing us for the manifestation of Glory. What the Law could not do, Grace is doing.

The free favor of God instills new principles, suggests new thoughts and, by inspiring us with gratitude, creates in us love to God and hatred of that which is opposed to God. Happy are they who go to the school of the Grace of God! This Grace of God entering into us shows us what was evil even more clearly than the Commandments do. We receive a vital, testing principle within whereby we discern between good and evil. The Grace of God provides us with instruction, but also with chastisement, as it is written, "As many as I love I rebuke and chasten."

As soon as we come under the conscious enjoyment of the Free Grace of God, we find it to be a holy rule, a fatherly government, a heavenly training. We find not self-indulgence, much less licentiousness, but, on the contrary, the Grace of God both restrains and constrains us—it makes us free to holiness and delivers us from the law of sin and death by "the law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus."

Grace has its discipline and *Grace has its chosen disciples*, for you cannot help noticing that while the 11th verse says that, "the Grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men," yet it is clear that this Grace of God has not exercised its holy *discipline* upon all men and, therefore, the text changes its, "all men," into, "us."

Usually in Scripture, when you get a generality, you soon find a particularity near it. The text has it, "teaching us that denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously and godly, in this present world." Thus you see that Grace has its *own disciples*.

Are you a disciple of the Grace of God? Did you ever come and submit yourself to it? Have you learned to spell that word, "faith"? Have you childlike trust in Jesus? Have you learned to wash in the basin of Atonement? Have you learned those holy exercises which are taught by the Grace of God? Can you say that your salvation is of Grace? Do you know the meaning of that text, "By Grace are you saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God"?

If so, then you are His disciples and the Grace of God which has appeared so conspicuously has come to discipline you! As the disciples of Grace, endeavor to adorn its doctrine.

According to the previous verses, even a slave might do this. He might be an ornament to the Grace of God. Let Grace have such an effect upon your life and character that all may exclaim, "Look what Grace can do! Look how the Grace of God produces holiness in Believers!" All along I wish to be driving at the point which the Apostle is aiming at—that we are to be holy—holy because Grace exercises a purifying discipline and because we are the disciples of that Grace.

The discipline of Grace, according to the Apostle, has three results—denying, living, looking. You see the three words before you. The first is, "denying."

When a young man comes to our College, he usually has much to unlearn. If his education has been neglected, a sort of instinctive ignorance covers his mind with briars and brambles. If he has gone to some faulty school where the teaching is flimsy, his tutor has, first of all, to fetch out of him what he has been badly taught. 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! A man proposes to teach a language in six months and in the end, a great thing is done if one of his pupils is able to forget all his nonsense in six years!

When the Holy Spirit comes into the heart, He finds that we know so much, already, of what it were well to leave unknown—we are self-conceited, we are puffed up. We have learned lessons of worldly wisdom and carnal policy—and these we need to unlearn and deny. The Holy Spirit works this denying in us by the discipline of Grace.

What have we to deny? First, we have to deny ungodliness. That is a lesson which many of you have great need to learn. Listen to working men. "Oh," they say, "we have to work hard. We cannot think about God or religion." This is ungodliness! The Grace of God teaches us to deny this—we come to loathe such atheism.

Others are prospering in the world and they cry, "If you had as much business to look after as I have, you would have no time to think about your soul or another world. Trying to battle with the competition of the times leaves me no opportunity for prayer or Bible reading! I have enough to do with my day-book and ledger." This also is ungodliness! The Grace of God leads us to deny this—we abhor such forgetfulness of God!

A great work of the Holy Spirit is to make a man godly, to make him think of God, to make him feel that this present life is not all, but that there is a judgment to come wherein he must give an account before God. God cannot be forgotten with impunity. If we treat Him as if He were nothing and leave Him out of our calculations for life, we shall make a fatal mistake.

O my Hearer, there is a God and, as surely as you live, you are accountable to Him! When the Spirit of God comes with the Grace of the Gospel, He removes our inveterate ungodliness and causes us to deny it with joyful earnestness.

We next deny “worldly lusts,” that is, the lusts of the present world or age which I described to you, just now, as coming in between the two appearings. This present age is as full of evil lusts as that in which Paul wrote concerning the Cretins. The lust of the eyes, the lust of the flesh and the pride of life are yet with us. Wherever the Grace of God comes effectually, it makes the loose living person deny the desires of the flesh. It causes the man who lusted after gold to conquer his greediness. It brings the proud man away from his ambitions. It trains the lazy to diligence and it sobers the wanton mind which cared only for the frivolities of life.

Not only do we *leave* these lusts, but we *deny* them. We have an abhorrence of those things wherein we formerly placed our delight. Our cry is, “What have I to do any more with idols?” To the worldling, we say, “These things may belong to you, but as for us, we cannot own them. Sin shall no more have dominion over us. We are not of the world and, therefore, its ways and fashions are none of ours.”

The period in which we live shall have no paramount influence over us, for our truest life is with Christ in eternity and our conversation is in Heaven. The Grace of God has made us deny the prevailing philosophies, glories, maxims and fashions of this present world. In the best sense we are nonconformists. We desire to be crucified to the world and the world to us. This was a great thing for Grace to do among the degraded sensualists of Paul’s day—and it is not a less glorious achievement in these times.

But then, Brothers and Sisters, you cannot be complete with a merely negative religion—you must have something positive. And so the next word is *living*—that “we should *live* soberly, righteously and godly, in this present world.”

Observe, Brethren, that the Holy Spirit expects us to live in this present world and, therefore, we are not to exclude ourselves from it. This age is the battlefield in which the soldier of Christ is to fight. Society is the place in which Christianity is to exhibit the Graces of Christ ... If all the good men and true were to form a select colony and do nothing else but pray and hear sermons, they would simply be refusing to serve God in His own appointed way. No, you have to live soberly, godly, righteously *in this world*, such as it is, at present! It is of no use for you to scheme to escape from it! You are bound to face this torrent and buffet all its waves. If the Grace of God is in you, that Grace is meant to be displayed—not in a select and secluded retreat—but in this present world. You are to shine in the darkness like a light.

This life is described in a three-fold way. You are, first, to live “*soberly*”—that is, for yourself. “Soberly” in all your eating and your drinking and in the indulgence of all bodily appetites—that goes without saying. Drunks and gluttons, fornicators and adulterers cannot inherit the Kingdom of God! You are to live soberly in all your thinking, all your speaking, all your acting. There is to be sobriety in all your worldly pursuits. You are to have yourself well in hand. You are to be self-restrained.

I know some Brothers who are not often sober. I do not accuse them of being drunk with wine, but they are *mentally* intoxicated—they have no reason, no moderation, no judgment. They are all spur and no rein. Right or wrong, they must have that which they have set their hearts upon. They never look round to take the full bearing of a matter. They never estimate calmly—but with closed eyes they rush on like bulls. Alas for these unsober people!

They are not to be depended on—they are everything by turns and nothing long. The man who is disciplined by the Grace of God becomes thoughtful, considerate, self-contained and he is no longer tossed about by passion, or swayed by prejudice. There is only one insobriety into which I pray we may fall and, truth to say, that is the truest sobriety.

Of this the Scripture says, "Be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be filled with the Spirit." When the Spirit of God takes full possession of us, then we are borne along by His sacred energy and are filled with a Divine enthusiasm which needs no restraint. Under all other influences we must guard ourselves against yielding too completely, that thus we may live "soberly."

As to his fellow men, the Believer lives "*righteously*." I cannot understand that Christian who can do a dirty thing in business. Craft, cunning, over-reaching, misrepresentation and deceit are no instruments for the hand of godly men! I am told that my principles are too angelic for business life—that a man cannot be a match for his fellow men in trade if he is too Puritan. Others are up to tricks and he will be ruined if he cannot trick them in return!

O my dear Hearers, do not talk in this way! If you mean to go the way of the devil, say so—and accept the consequences. But if you profess to be servants of God, deny all partnership with unrighteousness! Dishonesty and falsehood are the opposites of godliness! A Christian man may be poor, but he must live righteously—he may lack sharpness, but he must *not* lack integrity! A Christian profession without uprightness is a lie! Grace must discipline us to righteous living.

Towards God we are told in the text that we are to be *godly*. Every man who has the Grace of God in him, indeed, and of a truth, will think much of God and will seek first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness. God will enter into all his calculations.

God's Presence will be his joy;
God's strength will be his confidence;
God's Providence will be his inheritance;
God's Glory will be the chief end of his being;
God's Law the guide of his conversation!

Now, if the Grace of God, which has appeared so plainly to all men, has really come with its sacred discipline upon us, it is teaching us to live in this three-fold manner.

Once more, there is *looking*, as well as living. One work of the Grace of God is to cause us to be “looking for that blessed hope of the glorious appearing of the great God and our Savior Jesus Christ.” What is that “blessed hope”? Why, first, that when He comes we shall rise from the dead, if we have fallen asleep, and that if we are alive and remain, we shall be changed at His appearing! Our hope is that we shall be approved of Him and shall hear Him say, “Well done, good and faithful servant.” This hope is not of debt, but of Grace! Though our Lord will give us a reward, it will not be according to the Law of Works.

We expect to be like Jesus when we shall see Him as He is. When Jesus shines forth as the sun, “then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the Kingdom of our Father.” Our gain by godliness cannot be counted down into the palm of our hand. It lies in the glorious future and yet, to faith, it is so near that at this moment I almost hear the chariot of the Coming One! The Lord comes and in the coming of the Lord lies the great hope of the Believer— his great stimulus to overcome evil—his incentive to perfect holiness in the fear of the Lord!

Oh to be found blameless in the day of the manifestation of our Lord! God grant us this! Do you not see, Brothers and Sisters, how the discipline of the Doctrine of Grace runs towards the separating of us from sin and the making us to live unto God?

III. Lastly, and briefly, the text sets forth certain of OUR ENCOURAGEMENTS. I will only briefly hint at them. In this great battle for right, truth and holiness, what could we do, my Brothers and Sisters, if we were left alone?

But our first encouragement is that Grace has come to our rescue, for in the day when the Lord Jesus Christ appeared among men, He brought for us the Grace of God to help us to overcome all iniquity. He that struggles, now, against inbred sin has the Holy Spirit within him to help him. He that goes forth to fight against evil in other men by preaching the Gospel has that same Holy Spirit going with the Truth of God to make it like a fire and like a hammer. I would lay down my weapons and retreat from a fight so hopeless were it not that the Lord of Hosts is with us, the God of Jacob is our refuge!

The Grace of God that brings salvation from sin has flashed forth conspicuously like the lightning which is seen from one part of the Heaven to the other—and our victory over darkness is insured. However hard the conflict with evil, it is not desperate. We may hope on and hope always!

A certain warrior was found in prayer and when his king sneered, he answered that he was pleading with his majesty's august (majestic, dignified) ally. I question whether God is the ally of anybody when he goes forth with gun and sword, but in using those weapons which are "not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds," we may truly reckon upon our august Ally!

Speak the Truth of God, man, for God speaks with you! Work for God, woman, for God works in you to will and to do of His own good pleasure! The appearance of the Grace of God in the Person of Christ is encouragement enough to those who are under the most difficult circumstances and have to contend for righteousness against the deadliest odds. Grace has appeared—therefore let us be of good courage!

A second encouragement is that *another appearing is coming*. He who bowed His head in weakness and died in the moment of victory, is coming in all the Glory of His endless life! Do not question it, the world is not going to darken into an eternal night—the morning comes as well as the night and though sin and corruption abound, and the love of many waxes cold—these are but the tokens of His near coming who said that it would be so before His appearing! The right with the might and the might with the right shall be! As surely as God lives, it shall be so. We are not fighting a losing battle. The Lord must triumph.

Oh, if His suffering life and cruel death had been the only appearing, we might have feared. But it is not—it is but the first—and the prefatory part of His manifestation.

He comes! He comes! None can hinder His coming! Every moment brings Him nearer! Nothing can delay His Glory! When the hour shall strike, He shall appear in the majesty of God to put an end to the dominion of sin and bring in endless peace! Satan shall shortly be bruised under our feet—therefore comfort one another with these words and then prepare for further battle!

Sharpen your swords and be ready for close fighting! Trust in God and keep your powder dry! This must always be our war cry, "He must reign." We are looking for the appearing of the great God and Savior Jesus Christ!

Another encouragement is that *we are serving a glorious Master*. The Christ whom we follow is not a dead Prophet like Mohamed. Truly, we preach Christ Crucified, but we also believe in Christ risen from the dead, in Christ gone up on high, in Christ soon to come a second time! He lives and He lives as the great God and our Savior.

If, indeed, you are soldiers of such a Captain, throw fear to the winds! Can you be cowards when the Lord of Hosts leads you? Dare you tremble when at your head is The Wonderful, The Counselor, The Mighty God, The Everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace?

The trumpet is already at the lip of the archangel—who will not play the man? The great drum which makes the universe to throb, summons you to action—

**“Stand up, stand up for Jesus,
You soldiers of the Cross!
Lift high His royal banner,
It must not suffer loss.”**

His Cross is the old Cross, still, and none can overthrow it.
Hallelujah, hallelujah to the name of Jesus!

Then come the tender thoughts with which I finish, the memories of *what the Lord has done for us* to make us holy—"Who gave Himself for us." Special redemption, redemption with a wondrous price—"who gave Himself for us." Put away that trumpet and that drum! Take down the harp and gently touch its sweetest strings! Tell how the Lord Jesus loved us and gave Himself for us. O Sirs, if nothing else can touch our hearts, this must—"You are not your own, you are bought with a price."

And He gave Himself for us with these two objectives—first, redemption, that He might redeem us from all iniquity. That He might break the bonds of sin asunder and cast the cords of depravity far from us. He died—forget not that— died that your sins might die! He died that every lust might be dragged into captivity at His chariot wheels.

He gave Himself for you that you might give yourselves for Him! Again, He died that He might purify us—purify us unto Himself. How clean we must be if we are to be clean unto Him. The Holy Jesus will only commune with those whom He has purified after the manner of His own Nature—purified unto Himself. He has purified us to be completely His. No human hand may use the golden cup, no human incense may burn in the consecrated censer. We are purified unto Himself, as the Hebrew would put it, to be His *segullah*—His peculiar possession.

The translation, “peculiar people,” is unfortunate, because, “peculiar,” has come to mean odd, strange, singular. The passage really means that Believers are Christ’s own people, His choice and select portion. Saints are Christ’s crown jewels, His box of diamonds—His very, very, very own!

He carries His people as lambs in His bosom. He engraves their names on His heart. They are the inheritance to which He is the heir and He values them more than all the universe! He would lose everything sooner than lose one of them! He desires that you who are being disciplined by His Grace should know that you are altogether His.

You are Christ’s men. You are each one to feel, “I do not belong to the world. I do not belong to myself. I belong only to Christ. I am set aside by Him, for Himself, only, and His I will be.” The silver and the gold are His and the cattle upon a thousand hills are His—but He makes small account of them—“the Lord’s portion is His people.”

The Apostle finishes up by saying that we are to be a people “zealous of good works.” Would to God that all Christian men and women were disciplined by Divine Grace till they became zealous for good works! In holiness, zeal is sobriety.

We are not only to approve of good works and speak for good works, but we are to be red-hot for them! We are to be on fire for everything that is right and true. We may not be content to be quiet and inoffensive, but we are to be zealous of good works. Oh that my Lord’s Grace would set us on fire in this way! There is plenty of *fuel* in the Church—what is needed is *fire*!

A great many very respectable people are, in their sleepy way, doing as little as they can for any good cause. This will never do. We must wake up! Oh the quantity of ambulance work that Christ's soldiers have to do! One half of Christ's army has to carry the other half.

Oh that our Brothers and Sisters could get off the sick-list!

Oh that all of us were ardent, fervent, vigorous, zealous! Come, Holy Spirit, and quicken us! We may not go about to get this by our own efforts and energies, but God will work it by His Grace. Grace given us in Christ is the fountainhead of all holy impulse.

O heavenly Grace, come like a flood at this time and bear us right away! Oh that those of you who have never felt the Grace of God may be enabled to believe in the Lord Jesus Christ as to His first appearing!

Then, trusting in His death upon the Cross, you will learn to look for His second coming upon the Throne of God and you will rejoice in it!

Unto His great name be Glory forever and ever! Amen.