

Sunday, October 17, 2010—Titus: The Practice of Grace—Titus 2:13: Our Blessed Hope

### **Introduction**

- In our last study before the conference we saw how Grace is what teaches us how to live soberly, righteously, and Godly right now.
- Many people in our day many professing Christians refuse to believe in the rapture of the church the body of Christ because the word rapture does not appear in their Bible. While others have been caught up with the popular Christian fiction series *Left Behind*
- Rapture—1) a seizing by violence, 2) transport; ecstasy; violence of a pleasing passion; extreme joy or pleasure. *Webster's 1828 Dictionary*

### **Titus 2:13**

- ***“Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ;”***
- *“Looking For”*—means to await with confidence and patience. When something run or important is coming up in our lives we often say something like “I can’t wait,” or “I’m really looking forward to,” or “it can’t get here soon enough.”
- Paul says that we are to have that same attitude of excited anticipation for what he calls our blessed hope.
- According to *Strong's Concordance* the Greek word translated “blessed” means happy. The word is translated “blessed” 44 times, “happy” 5 times, and “happier” 1 time in the King James Bible
- *Webster's 1828 Dictionary* defines “blessed” as follows: 1) Made happy or prosperous; extolled; pronounced happy 2) Happy; prosperous in worldly affairs; enjoying spiritual happiness and the favor of God; enjoying heavenly felicity
- *“Hope”*—one of the meanings of hope is expectation of good, or joyful and confident expectation of eternal salvation according to *Strong's Concordance*
- As I said last weekend during the conference something minus hope equals nothing. Paul is telling us that we should confidently (hope) look with childlike anticipation for a happy (blessed) future that awaits us a believers.
- Our blessed hope is related to *“the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ.”* So what are we as believers looking forward to? The glorious appearing of Jesus Christ.
  - II Timothy 1:9-10—Jesus Christ appeared to Paul on the road to Damascus
  - I Timothy 6:14
  - II Timothy 4:1, 8

### **Which Appearing of Christ is This?**

- Acts 1:9-12—their focus here was not supposed to be on heavenly things but on earthly things?
- Philippians 3:20—Paul tells the Philippians the exact opposite from what the angels told the 11 Apostles in Acts 1. He tells us that our conversation is in heaven and we are supposed to be looking toward heaven for his return.
- Jeremiah 23:5—the 11 had been instructed about the signs that would precede Christ’s return to earth in glory to establish his kingdom.
- Luke 21:25-28—the Apostles were instructed to look up only after they had witness the specific signs Christ predicted would precede his second coming.
- Acts 2:14-21—the last day signs were beginning to come to past in Acts 2.
- Acts 3:19-20—this appearing of Christ is back to earth to vanquish his enemies and establish his kingdom on earth.
- Revelation 19—these verses depict the coming of Christ according to prophecy to establish his kingdom on earth with Israel as the head nation of the earth.

### **The Secret Nature of Our Blessed Hope**

- I Thessalonians 4:13-18—records the appearing of Christ that constituted the blessed hope of the believer. Notice the following details
  - Verse 13—believers can have hope because of the event Paul is describing here.
  - Verse 14—those who believe the gospel but have died God will bring with Him at this event.
  - Verse 15—believers that are still alive when this event occurs will not prevent or hamper those who have died from participating in this event.
  - Verse 16—Jesus Christ himself will appear in heaven accompanied by the shout of the archangel and the sounding of the trump of God resulting in the resurrection of dead believers.
  - Verse 17—“then” after the resurrection of the dead in Christ we who are alive and remain will be caught up (raptured) to meet the Lord in the air.
    - Acts 8:39—“caught away”
    - II Corinthians 12:2-4—“caught up”
  - Verse 18—the teaching of this event is supposed to bring comfort to believers.
- This is not the same event as when Jesus Christ comes back bodily to the Mount of Olives from whence he ascended in Acts 1.
- The Apostle Paul states many times that the body of Christ was a mystery not made known or revealed to the prophets in time past.
  - Romans 16:25
  - Ephesians 3
  - Colossians 1:25-27

- I Corinthians 15:51—Paul says that he is making known a mystery or something not previously made known. Not every member of the body of Christ is going to die before the current dispensation of Grace has run its course but all members will be changed.
- Paul already told us in I Thessalonians 4:13-18 that not every believer would sleep or die before Christ appeared in heaven to catch away his church.
- The only suitable way for this unprophecied age to end is through a perniciously unprophecied appearing of Christ.

### **The Blessed Nature of Our Hope**

- I Corinthians 15:52—when the last trump sounds the dead shall be raised incorruptible and we (those who are alive and remain) will be changed.
- I Corinthians 15:53-54—it is here that we will receive our gloried resurrection body that is fashioned like the glorified body of Jesus Christ.
- Philippians 3:20-21—we look for Christ to appear from heaven again because when he does we will escape the confines of this corruptible sin ridden flesh and receive a body “fashioned like unto his glorious body.”
- Ephesians 1:7—we currently possess the total and complete redemption from sin and its penalty.
- Ephesians 4:30—if our inner man has already been redeemed from sin what is left to redeem? Our outward man.
- Ephesians 1:13-14
- Romans 8:23-25—the reasons the next appearing of Christ is such a blessed hope is because it is when believers will finally be freed from the bondage of corruption and our bodies will be redeemed.
- Romans 5:3-5—our experience works to produce hope.

### **Concluding Remarks**

- Titus 2:13—we need to have the same childlike anticipation and expectation for this event as we do for the earthly temporal things we look forward to here on earth.