

The Epiphany of Glory

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[0 : 00] We are looking at chapter 2 of Titus.

! Paul begins this chapter with some specific duties, some practical things that as believers in the church we should be doing.

And you remember he kind of touched on every kind of major category or age category primarily and gave some duties, some specific duties that we should incorporate into our lives as believers, as members of the church.

All right, so he begins there and then Paul moves to what I have called some sublime doctrines. Doctrines that really represent a foundation.

A foundation for the practical things that we're to be doing, the specific duties. So the duties come first and then the foundation comes second in that order here in the chapter.

[1 : 37] And also to remind you that Paul connects these doctrines, these sublime doctrines I'm calling them, he connects them to the two comings of Christ.

That's why I entitled this portion of our study, the two divine epiphanies, epiphanies or comings or appearances of Jesus Christ.

So he connects the doctrines to the two comings of Christ and or again using the Greek word chosen by Paul, the epiphanies, the two epiphanies of Christ.

First one he mentions in verse 11, remember? He said, for the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared, has appeared to all men.

It has, it's epiphania, epiphania rather should be pronounced. Or the coming, the appearance of Christ.

[2 : 34] And that's, of course, a reference to the first coming. And then verse 13, looking for the blessed, hope and glorious appearing, epiphania, of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ.

And so even the way it's worded, we know that he's pointing forward. And so this would then be the second coming. All right, so we finished looking at the first epiphany of Christ, the epiphany of grace.

All right, we've already covered that. It took us a couple weeks to do that. And now second, then, the second of the two epiphanies, what actually I started to say I called, but really Paul called it the epiphany of glory.

The epiphany of glory. So I didn't really have to work very hard to get alliteration because when he mentions the first epiphany, he uses the word grace, the grace of God. And this second one, he uses the word glory.

So there you have it. Perfect. Ready made for a preacher like me. And so let me go ahead and read the verses. Actually, two of them, and then we'll get to the 15th verse a little bit later toward the end of the study.

[3 : 45] Verse 13, 14. Looking for the blessed hope and glorious appearing of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ, 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.

All right. So this, again, is a reference to something in the future. I mean, you can't read it and not pick up on that. Something he's pointing forward. Something coming in the future.

Certainly the apostle Paul's future. Or he wouldn't have written it in this way. And he's writing Titus. Titus is a contemporary of Paul. It would be in the future, in Titus' future.

Titus is a contemporary of Paul.

Titus is a contemporary of August. We'll count that even though it seems like it's kind of a conclusion to the chapter. But I think it fits with the subject.

[5 : 09] So we have only three verses. But these three verses are, I mean, they're just really packed full of stuff. That's why I have so many points in your outline. and so I've decided we're just going to milk it for all it's worth as we look through these three verses and so let me just get right to it here's the first one or letter A the expectation something said here about an expectation that's how he begins what does he say in verse 13 looking for looking for the blessed hope and glorious appearing looking for just one word in the Greek text and it is a word that suggests something a whole lot more than just belief in some future event you know there are a lot of people who believe in the second coming I mean a lot of Christians even some who are not believers believe that you know believe in the truth the fact maybe even just simply the possibility that Jesus is going to come again but that's not what he's talking about

I'm not talking about just simply believing in it as a fact Paul chooses a word that speaks of an anxious expectation that's why I use the word expectation as believers we're not just simply believing that he's going to come one day and we'll think about it if somebody reminds us of it but we are actually looking forward to it longing for it in fact perhaps we could even use that word to translate the Greek word and the idea that that it is that it conveys so it's not just looking for something it's longing for longing for the coming of Christ you know with anticipation maybe that would be another word anticipation expectation expectation now in terms of the words grammatical form you know I like to talk a lot about

Greek grammar and not to get too technical but the form of this word it's a participle you just have to dig back into your memory when you were in grade school or high school maybe even college and remember try to remember what you know about grammar it's a participle this word looking it's translated as a participle as you would expect it to be in English the English language but in addition to that and I've mentioned this many times and by now you know that any time a verb or participle is in the present tense what does that mean?

continuous action continuous and so really the meaning here is always in fact you can write it down this way it would be a good translation always anxiously looking and longing if I were writing a paraphrase or what do we call it an amplified version of this verse I would word it this way always anxiously looking and longing for the blessed hope and glorious appearing of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ so this is the idea behind this so it's not again it's not just simply believing in something that's going to happen and you know Jesus is coming in I believe that or I believe that more than that it's longing for it desiring it to come and come quickly it's anticipating it it's an expectation it's a you're anxious for it to happen I want you to notice something else about this before we move on this longing for the epiphany of glory is also the work of the epiphany of grace and see we you can't just simply look at what Paul writes here and just separate it neatly into two unrelated things there's no way you can say that the first coming and the implications of it first coming of Christ are somehow separated from and not connected to the second coming they're very much connected in fact as we go along

Paul's going to actually take us back to the first coming but I want you to notice here that the epiphany of glory this this whole idea of looking forward to longing for this event to take place that in itself is a work of grace the work of grace in your life when Jesus came the first time so the participle looking is in line with a previous participle in the passage which is the word denying those two participles come in a logical kind of unfolding of what Paul is trying to teach us here denying is the participle which is in verse 12 and then here in verse 13 looking is the participle and both of these things are connected to the coming of Christ the first coming of Christ alright so when Paul says starting with verse 11 for the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men teaching us when he says that there are two things that grace teaches us two things according to the participle verse 12 the first thing is denying that's the participle denying ungodliness and worldly lust that which belongs to this earth that's earthy belongs to our flesh alright so we're to deny those things that are of this earth denying ungodliness and worldly lusts second then in verse 13 looking that's the participle looking for the blessed hope and glorious appearing of our great God and Savior

[11 : 31] Jesus Christ that which belongs to heaven so you see kind of the logic here and why the two must come together when we look back and think of the first coming of Christ first coming of grace the epiphany of grace among other things it's working in us this ability and desire to deny the ungodliness and worldly lusts those things that are part of our earthbound existence here sinful part at the same time enabling us to always be looking forward to the epiphany of glory the coming the

second coming of Christ so we're denying the earthly and more and more looking and longing forward to the heavenly and I guess we could say that the longer we live the more we understand that and long for that though really what Paul is telling us is that we no matter what age we are we are to always be longing for always denying the worldly and always longing for the heaven the coming of Jesus

Christ so and so there's the application Christians deny the things of this sinful world and at the same time long for the things of heaven specifically longing for the one who will one day come again from heaven alright so the first thing here is the expectation the second the revelation the revelation verse 13 again looking for the blessed hope and glorious appearing glorious appearing of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ now some of you may be looking at your Bibles rather than looking at what I've printed on your notes and if you have anything other than the I think the New King James and I believe also the NIV if you have anything other than those three then you'll notice that it's worded a little bit differently in your version and it's important to note this because the Greek word for glorious that's how it's translated here in the New King James it's translated two different ways now in the Greek text regardless of which manuscripts the version of the Bible is using the word glorious is a noun but if you notice in the New King James as I read it a moment ago glorious is used there as an adjective the glorious appearing so it's connected to the appearing you know as adjectives do it's modifying the word appearing glorious appearing you'll find it that way in King James New King James and the NIV be or another way to translate it and I think the right way probably the best way is and I'll just read it from the

New American Standard the appearing so we're looking for the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ now that's something different isn't it and that really is translating this word doxa as as a noun that it is glory not an adjective glorious something but we're looking for the appearing of the glory the glory of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ now the second one is I think the better of the versions and why is that well a number of reasons that we don't really have to get into tonight about grammar and words and such but probably the best and most obvious reason why it should be translated that way because it's consistent with verse 11 it parallels verse 11 in verse 11 you have

Paul saying the grace of God has appeared verse 13 we have appearing of the glory of God so you see it's consistent the grace of God the glory of God we look back to the epiphany of the grace of God that's the cross the first coming of Christ and I mean we can look back and we look forward to the appearing of the glory of God the glory of God and so Paul is describing there I think the way in which Jesus will come when he appears the second time he will come in all of his glory now that's a long way of explaining what we already know anyway but I'm trying to be true to the text and help us understand what Paul is saying in this passage even though even before we looked at the passage we know that when Jesus comes second time he's going to come in all of his glory but that's what

[17 : 03] Paul is saying here and it's important I think to note that when he came the first time I mean just thinking about you know him coming in glory when he came the first time John you remember said in John chapter 1 verse 14 he said we speaking of the apostles we beheld his glory and now he's talking about the first coming John chapter 1 we beheld his glory the glory as of the only begotten of the father full of grace and truth remember when John wrote that in 1st John now he's talking about the first coming so it's not then to say that Jesus did not come in glory the first time because John said that we the apostles we beheld it we noticed we observed it the glory the glory as of the only begotten of the father but in what way were the apostles able to behold the glory well in at least a couple of ways number one through signs through signs through sign miracles that's what

John said a little bit later in chapter 2 verse 11 he said this beginning of signs Jesus did in Cana of Galilee remember he was invited to the wedding a friend of the family and turned the water into wine and John says there this is the beginning the beginning of signs it was a miracle but these are miracles sign miracles beginning of signs Jesus did in Cana of Galilee and manifested his glory he manifested his glory and his disciples believed in him now that's where it stayed very clearly but we could say that that would apply to all of the sign miracles that Jesus performed while he was alive on this planet and through those signs he was manifesting his glory alright so John could say we beheld his glory the glory as of the only begotten of the father because his sign miracles proved it and they observed those things but we could also add to that that he revealed his glory primarily

I think through through the cross and his resurrection and the events that transpired around those two very crucial events in redemptive history he revealed his glory alright alright so we could say that yeah we're looking for the glory of God that is Jesus coming in all of his glory but that's not going to necessarily mean that that's the first time he revealed his glory he revealed his glory to his apostles and closest disciples when he came the first time they beheld him through his sign miracles as well of course more importantly through his his cross and resurrection alright all that's true and yet when Jesus came the first time his full glory was not revealed was it it couldn't have been his full glory was veiled that's the best way to kind of describe it it was covered it was veiled and no one not even the apostles perceived his full glory were able to see his full glory now the veil we could say this we could understand in this sense the veil of his full glory was partially drawn back for his disciples his apostles again through his sign miracles and the events around the cross and resurrection we could maybe go a step further and say the veil that was covering his glory was drawn back even more for Peter James and John on the Mount of Transfiguration and probably the one event during the lifetime of the apostles where Jesus manifested his glory allowed them to view his glory the most and yet it was still somewhat veiled there and so but we could say this that for the majority of people who were alive and were there when Jesus was walking this earth the majority of people even and especially those who even witnessed the cross the majority of the people who saw Jesus at his first coming nothing of his glory was perceived they didn't see any of it in fact very vehemently denied it that he was who he claimed to be but at his second coming and this is where we're going with this his second coming the veil will be completely removed from his glory we can't even imagine what that will be like well we by then we will be able to imagine that we will we will behold his glory that they will be completely removed and so the appearing the revelation of the glory of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ Christ Jesus so the expectation the revelation next see the identification and what we have here in these verses is really one of the clearest identifications of the deity of Jesus you say well the Bible claim his deity that Jesus has got well it does not very very often and a little bit cryptic really in the gospels though I think we can find many verses that that very definitely point to his deity but even the gospel the writers of the epistles the rest of the New Testament don't always say definitely that he is God but this is a clear identification of the deity of Jesus so look at verse 13 looking for the blessed hope that first thing we should see in that verse identifying who Jesus is the blessed hope and the appearing of the glory of our great [23 : 42] God and Savior Christ Jesus that's in the New Roman Standard alright so on the one hand we should understand that the blessed hope that Paul mentions here the blessed hope that we're looking for he said looking for the blessed hope the blessed hope is the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior both the blessed hope and the glory could be capitalized here in the passage meaning that these two things are personified these two things are really designated for who Jesus is Jesus is our blessed hope that we're looking for and Jesus is the glory that will one day be revealed that we're looking for but what

I really want you to notice here is how Jesus is identified in terms of his full deity! said it was silly there is much debate about this centered on this one passage and of course they get into all the nuances of Greek grammar and such and so there are those! who say well actually he's talking about two different entities there's the great God that's the deity God and then there's the Savior that's that's Jesus and they make a separation between the two and King James version seems to suggest that and I didn't give that to you but let me just read it to you here's how the King James translates it the glorious appearing of the great God and our Savior Jesus Christ now we read that and think well you know that is talking about you know two different ways to identify the same person but I'm telling you that in grammar proper grammar this would suggest two entities two separate persons the great God and our Savior Christ Jesus and so that's what you might conclude a person could conclude perhaps I think wrongly but from the King James and actually in the original language there's only one definite article definite article the only one the in the text and it is the great God and Savior our or our great God they don't even translate the the in most translations but the the belongs at the beginning and some versions say our great God and Savior Jesus Christ and that's probably the best way to render it pretty easy to see so it's not two people who are coming two persons it's not God the Father and God the Son who are coming and we're looking for them to come it's just

God the Son and he is God and our Savior so that's the real importance of the phrase it's not that only one person of the Trinity will be coming only one person is but the real important here is that the one person of the Trinity who will be coming we're looking for that one person is God is God himself and so the one coming is not merely a perfect human who is now glorified because of what he did at the cross the one coming is!

[28 : 08] is the one who always has been God and so it's a clear statement of the deity Jesus Christ he is the great God the great God mega in fact that's the word kind of loses a little shine when you you know somehow it just doesn't seem to fit with God mega God that sounds like some science fiction but that's the word mega the great God and who is he he's Jesus Christ he's the savior Christ Jesus so we're looking for our blessed hope to appear we're looking for our glory to appear we're looking for our great God to appear and his name is Jesus Christ he's coming alright so the expectation the revelation the identification and then next D the humiliation and this is where Paul connects again with the cross alright so verse 14 says who gave himself for us gave himself so Paul is now going back to the first coming so he's connecting the two together here so he connects the great

God and Savior with the cross Paul never strays very far from the cross and neither should we Charles Haddon Spurgeon he's famous for saying in preaching he said I select my text and then I make a beeline for the cross very famous statement and it's good instruction and Paul that's the way Paul operated so when Paul states that Christ Jesus gave himself he's clearly referring to his self humiliation emptying and right off it reminds me of Philippians chapter 2 verses 5 and 8 Christ Jesus who being in the form of God did not consider it robbery to be equal with God but made himself of no reputation taking the form of a bondservant and coming in the likeness of men and being found in appearance as a man he humbled himself and became obedient to the point of death even the death of the cross and so he gave himself the humiliation then it gets even better than that

E point E the substitution the substitution verse 14 he gave himself for us and you find especially in Paul's writings this this this this this kind of idea this kind of construction for us find it quite often the Greek word for here means to convey the idea more than just in behalf of more than that it means to convey the idea of in place of and so the truth is substitution Jesus didn't just die for me in the sense of in behalf of me he loved me he cared for me so he died thinking about me he died in my place and you I think you know that truth that to be true substitution

Mark chapter chapter 10 verse 45 this is Jesus said for even the son of man did not come to be served but to serve and to give his life a ransom for many in the place of many and I'm in the many are you in the many the humiliation the substitution and and then we could ask the question well why why did he give himself for us in place of us why to redeem us so F is the redemption redemption verse 14 that he might redeem us from every lawless deed redeem us alright so Jesus Christ did not give himself for us on the cross just to secure our forgiveness he did that but also to deliver us to redeem us to deliver us from the penalty and the power of sin the word redeem is a really it's a legal term and you could maybe perhaps think of a couple of examples one would be maybe the example of a prisoner who is being held in prison in jail and then someone can come and with an official receipt receipt of full payment for the prisoner's fine or debt or crime or whatever and then having presented that the prisoner is then released he's redeemed you could use it in the context of a slave who is in bondage to the owner indebted to the owner many slaves of course even in our day but especially in ancient times there were slaves because of debt they didn't pay they had to serve a time of slavery in order to pay back their debt well somebody could bring a receipt paying for that debt and then the slave is redeemed redeemed you could use it even in the example of a hostage case of a hostage in fact this is kind of interesting illustration someone can come and pay the ransom for the hostage the ransom that is demanded so the hostage can be freed and then upon presenting the ransom the agreed upon ransom the hostage is then released he's redeemed that's the idea behind the word all so we can see the connection there with Jesus the cross sacrifice the payment for our sin and really to think of it in terms of a ransom that Jesus in fact the Bible speaks of it in those terms in a couple of places that he ransomed us his death was a ransom for our sin so that we could be redeemed right now the question always is to whom did Jesus pay the ransom and you know if I were to just ask that generally a lot of times people say well of course he paid it to the devil but did he or did he pay the ransom to God the ransom to God and I think the answer is of course God the father he paid the ransom to God the

father and we can understand that even from this passage in what is said next that he might redeem us from what every lawless deed so we're being redeemed or ransomed!

[35 : 45] The ransom is paid because we have committed lawless deeds now did we commit these lawless deeds against the devil no it's not his laws we've broken but rather against God and so the ransom for our sin had to be paid to God himself in fact here's where it really gets interesting God paid the ransom to himself so that we could be redeemed and Jesus paid that price he being God and that's what Jesus did alright let me finish try to finish this up we've got a few more to go so today we're looking for longing for the appearing of our redeemer and then G the purification verse 14 and purify for himself his own special people so

Jesus gave himself for us that's how the verse begins to accomplish two things one we just said that he might redeem us and then two that he might purify us purify us which means to cleanse us from all sin we looked at that when we studied first John just recently so purification purifies to cleanse us from all sin which is what we needed him to do and then that leads us to H the separation the separation not our separation from God but our separation from the world to himself to be separated to him unto him verse 14 to purify and purify for himself his own special people this is really a wonderful thing to be actually!

the Bible uses a number of different metaphors or images of adoption into the family of God but also many times is the idea of a personal possession!

We're given a kind of foreshadowing of that in the Old Testament with Israel being God's peculiar people his personal possession and then of course Peter says that of us as believers we are his inheritance his possession and so that's the idea here he's purifying us separating us from sin but separating us unto himself for his own personal possession you and I belong to God we're blood bought and sometimes we think of it and this is what Jesus accomplished through his cross and by the grace of God through faith in him he makes us his own special people so separation unto God I sanctification and this all these things kind of come together in one glorious kind of process that God is taking us through sanctification verse 14 his own special people and then these words are added zealous for good works he's making us to be people who are zealous determined want to live our lives doing good works for the glory of God this is the process of sanctification becoming more like Jesus in the way we think in the way we act words we speak decisions we make places we go activities we involve ourselves in our way of thinking all of it becoming more and more like Christ this is the process so he's purifying us he saved us and purified us redeemed us and purified us to make us his own special people a people who are zealous to live just like Jesus that's that's really what sanctification is all about the end of course the end result of sanctification accomplishment of sanctification glorification which will take place when we get to heaven and then one more validation the validation and this is where verse 15 kind of kind of connects with all of this what does [40 : 34] Paul say to Titus he says speak these things what things things he's just been talking about speak these things teach these things exhort and rebuke with all authority so exhort that means to give instruction in these things instruction on doing the right things and then rebuke is kind of the negative side of that to rebuke or to correct the wrong things so instruct in the right things correct the wrong things and let no one despise you Paul said something like that to Timothy too didn't he and the idea here is that Titus had Paul's authority in what he was speaking and teaching and how he was leading so you can take all these things Titus what I have just given you and you teach these things and don't let anybody say you have no right to say it because you are speaking these things in my authority apostolic authority that makes it very powerful and authoritative of course now is that something we can do today is that something I can do to speak under the authority of the apostles absolutely we have it recorded in scripture so you know the very things that

God the Holy Spirit inspired the apostles to write down and to command we preach those and we can preach those in the full authority of God actually but we can preach it with apostolic authority so that you know really when you take that and apply it to everything that Paul has been writing here in this chapter then it validates its truth it validates the truth and Paul is just basically concluding by saying everything I've said is true and it comes in full authority so do those things so that's how he concludes the chapter so we'll get to move on next not next time we won't be here hopefully encourage you to be down at Blue Stem and be a part of the revival services