

Introduction

Most everyone appreciates good fashion. Americans spend an average of \$250 Billion a year on fashions. Worldwide annual revenues in the fashion industry 1 trillion 200 Billion. The fashion industry employed four million 200 thousand people in 2013. People wear certain fashions for different reasons; mostly to enhance their image. We call it a “fashion statement.” Many want to affirm something about themselves by what they choose to wear. Or draw attention to something. Certain groups identify with fellow group members by what they wear.

Although the Bible does address fashion on a literal or physical level, it has much more to say about what our external behavior communicates concerning our internal nature or core. Paul told both the Ephesian and Colossian church to discard the “clothes” associated with the old life and put on the “clothes” associated with the new life in Christ. Exhibit behavior that identifies you with Jesus Christ and His teaching. Today’s passage comes from a divinely inspired letter of Paul to a young pastor named Titus.

Titus was a Gentile convert of Paul who served with him on many of his journeys. Paul left Titus in Crete to establish the churches in that area. Paul encouraged Titus to teach concerning the fashion (behavior) of “graced” people; those who have received the grace of God for salvation.

This is a trustworthy statement; and concerning these things I want you to speak confidently, so that those who have believed God will be careful to engage in good deeds. These things are good and profitable for men. Titus 3:8

Our people must also learn to engage in good deeds to meet pressing needs, so that they will not be unfruitful. Titus 3:14

But as for you, speak the things which are fitting for sound doctrine. Titus 2:1

...showing all good faith so that they will adorn the doctrine of God our Savior in every respect. Titus 2:10

The combination of great music and solid lyrics effectively impacts those who hear. In the same way, the way Christians live (music) adorns the unchanging gospel message. It draws attention to the message. Bad music detracts from powerful lyrics. Too often, the grating music blaring from a Christian’s life discourages seekers from exploring the life-transforming truth of the Gospel. When our behavior is no different than the world around us, our impact on the world diminishes.

Jesus declared, “You are the salt of the earth.” God generates a thirst for the “Water of Life” through the behavior of His followers. Jesus also said, “If salt has lost its saltiness it is no longer useful.” The only way that sodium chloride (salt) loses its saltiness is due to dilution.

Paul instructed Titus to educate various groups in the church to “adorn” the gospel message by the way they lived. Live lives (wear clothes) that draw attention to the message.

But as for you, speak the things which are fitting for sound teaching. Titus 2:1

The next nine verses urge specific ways to adorn the Gospel related to each group.

***Older men** are to be temperate, dignified, sensible, sound in faith, in love, in perseverance. **Older women** likewise are to be reverent in their behavior, not malicious gossips nor enslaved to much wine, teaching what is good, so that they may encourage the **young women** to love their husbands, to love their children, to be sensible, pure, workers at home, kind, being subject to their own husbands, so that the word of God will not be dishonored. Likewise urge the **young men** to be sensible; in all things show yourself to be an example of good deeds, with purity in doctrine, dignified, sound in speech which is beyond reproach, so that the opponent will be put to shame, having nothing bad to say about us. Urge **bondslaves** to be subject to their own masters in everything, to be well-pleasing, not argumentative, not pilfering, but showing all good faith so that they will adorn the doctrine of God our Savior in every respect. Titus 2:2-10*

That is the context of the passage I want to focus on today. Paul told Titus to teach people to live differently “FOR” “because”... Our passage begins with the word “for” alerting us to a reason why we should live differently.

Why should we live differently?

For (because) the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all men, instructing us to deny ungodliness and worldly desires and to live sensibly, righteously and godly in the present age, looking for the blessed hope and the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior, Christ Jesus, who gave Himself for us to redeem us from every lawless deed, and to purify for Himself a people for His own possession, zealous for good deeds. These things speak and exhort and reprove with all authority. Let no one disregard you. Titus 2:11-15

Basically the Spirit calls us to live differently because we ARE different.

What makes us different? The appearance of God’s grace granting salvation. This passage bears definite similarities to Peter’s message we explored for the past two weeks. Peter encouraged new behavior motivated by hope or expectation of a future grace to be brought at the revelation of Jesus Christ and a deep gratitude for Jesus’ sacrifice on our behalf. Here, Paul conveyed a comparable message. Live differently based on the hope of Jesus’ future appearing and an appreciation for His ultimate sacrifice on our behalf. On the basis of the grace brought to us at our new birth and the hope of further grace yet to be brought to us at Christ’s appearing, grab hold of the grace available on a daily basis to put off the behavior associated with our first birth and put on the behavior possible as a result of our new birth.

The Instruction to live differently

Live differently for godly living highlights godly teaching

The Appearance of Grace

The appearance of the grace of God did TWO things.

It illuminated (past) the way of salvation for all men.

It continually instructs (present) us to live differently having denied the old ways.

The Motivation to live differently

Reflect on (anticipate) the future appearing of Jesus

Remember the past sacrifice of Jesus

He sacrificed himself...

In order to redeem us from the old life and every **lawless** deed

In order to purify us to live a new life that is zealous for every **good** deed

Before we dive deeper into this text, I want to expand on your concept of grace.

Last week I mentioned that grace is like a precious cut gem with numerous facets that magnificently reflect the light. We also usually place gems in an appropriate or complementary setting. The term used to communicate grace also appears in at least six different settings. The base term “charis” means “favor or blessing offered apart from merit.” It is sometimes even translated gift. Most usually define grace as “unmerited favor.” In most cases, it refers to God’s unmerited favor on undeserving people. Another definition assigns a word to each letter of the word GRACE. **God’s Riches AT CHRIST’S EXPENSE**

Many focus on one application or setting of God’s favor or blessing – “Saved by Grace” There are 5 other settings highlighting God’s amazing grace.

Common Grace (World Setting)

This is the favor that God shows to all mankind in general.

“But love your enemies, and do good, and lend, expecting nothing in return; and your reward will be great, and you will be sons of the Most High; for He Himself is kind to ungrateful and evil men. Luke 6:35

“But I say to you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, so that you may be sons of your Father who is in heaven; for He causes His sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sends rain on the righteous and the unrighteous. Matthew 5:44-45

Saving Grace (Salvation Setting)

Technically, grace does not save us. God saves us! Grace is the basis on which God saves us.

For by GRACE you have been saved (by God) through faith; and that not of yourselves, it (salvation) is the gift of God Ephesians 2:8

Our current passage and many others reference this context. God’s grace appeared bringing salvation.

Teaching Grace (Motivational setting)

Our current passage references this aspect of God’s favor. In this case, God’s grace continually teaches us to live differently. It is only by God’s favor that we can learn anything. The example of God’s grace to us teach us how to related to others. Plus it is God’s favor on our life that motivates holy living.

For the GRACE of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all men, instructing us to deny ungodliness and worldly desires and to live sensibly, righteously and godly in the present age, Titus 2:11-12

Daily or Enabling Grace (Present Daily Empowering setting)

This references the favor or grace of God available on a daily basis to live godly. God’s grace provides the motivation and power to live for Him.

For we do not have a high priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but One who has been tempted in all things as we are, yet without sin. Therefore let us draw near with confidence to the throne of grace, so that we may receive mercy and find GRACE to help in time of need. Hebrews 4:15-16

Future or revelation Grace (Future Event Setting)

We explored this aspect of God’s favor the past two weeks.

Therefore, having prepared your minds for action, keeping sober in spirit, hope completely on the GRACE to be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ. 1 Peter 1:13

Peter refers to our ultimate complete transformation into the likeness of Jesus Christ.

Ageless or everlasting Grace (Eternity Setting)

I guess this should be a given, but Paul referenced it in His letter to the Ephesians.

But God, being rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, even when we were dead in our transgressions, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved), and raised us up with Him, and seated us with Him in the heavens in Christ Jesus, so that in the ages to come He might show the surpassing riches of His GRACE in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus. 2:4-7

There are yet two future demonstrations of God's grace yet to be realized; one, at the appearance of Christ and two, during all the ages following. Through eternity we will continually be amazed at the grace of God toward undeserving rebels. OK, let's follow the logic.

I. The instruction to live differently

Paul references embracing a lifestyle that corresponds to our calling often in his writings.

Showing all good faith so that they will adorn (by behavior) the teaching of God our Savior in every respect. Titus 2:10

Paul instructed Timothy to address some key character issues related to the various groups in the churches which we previously referenced. He basically wants them to realize that the behavior of Jesus followers must match the One they claim to follow. Godly living highlights godly teaching. You can't separate Biblical teaching from Biblical living. Live different because you ARE different.

II. The Appearance of Grace

As I already mentioned, the previous admonition to live differently includes a reason.

"FOR" We should live differently **because** of the revelation of God's GRACE.

For the grace of God has appeared Titus 2:11

The word "appeared" means "to shine upon" "give light" "become visible" "give light" Paul used a verb indicating a point-time action. At a point in time, this aspect of God's character became prominent. The concept of a God of Grace or a throne of grace was not so prominent in the thinking of people of that time; either for Jew or Gentle. The gods were capricious, vindictive, unpredictable and often flat out mean. They required appeasement through sacrifice, offering and service. Any favor had to be earned through hard work and sacrifice.

Jesus entered this dark world as a light.

In Him was life, and the life was the Light of men. The Light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not comprehend it. Jesus was the true Light which, coming into the world, enlightens every man. John 1:4-5,9

Along with Jesus came the revelation of a God of grace.

And the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us, and we saw His glory, glory as of the only begotten from the Father, full of GRACE and truth. John 1:14

Paul mentioned two things that came as a result of the appearance of this glorious grace.

A. It revealed the way to salvation

For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all men Titus 2:11

Any hope of salvation from the wrath of God stems from a different basis than human merit. All have sinned and come short of God's glory.

by the works of the Law NO flesh will be justified in God's sight... Romans 3:20

For the first time, God offers a means of salvation to both Jew and Gentile apart from merit.

The second thing was to instruct us how to live differently.

B. It continually instructs us to live differently

Paul switched from a point time action to a present tense action. The new realization of this undeserved favor of God motivates the recipient to live differently.

instructing us to deny ungodliness and worldly desires and to live sensibly, righteously and godly in the present age, Titus 2:12

There is a major difference between law-keeping and grace living. Law-keeping demands action in order to receive blessing. Grace motivates action through unconditional blessing. We respond to God not in order to gain blessing but because we are already blessed. Works is not antithetical but integral to grace. It all has to do with the reason why we serve Him. God's law is not the problem. There is nothing wrong with God's law; it is an expression of His holiness. The Bible condemns keeping God's laws in order to gain God's favor. The Bible encourages keeping God's laws because God has already blessed us. Understanding God's unconditional favor motivates two things.

1. Deny ungodliness and worldly desires of lusts.

instructing us to deny ungodliness and worldly desires and to live sensibly, righteously and godly in the present age, Titus 2:12

Paul used a word meaning "to deny, refuse or reject". Considering the verb action, this passage literally reads, "having rejected" once and for all ungodliness and worldly desires, grace teaches us to embrace a life of sober, righteous and godly living. Ungodliness refers to those actions or behavior that does not reflect the character of God or one claiming to be God's child.

2. Embrace a life of sober, righteous and godly living.

Live differently because you are different. Because you are different, live different.

Those truly touched by God's grace are inspired to embrace God's path.

For we are His workmanship (creative masterpiece / poem), created in Christ Jesus for good works (to live differently), which God prepared beforehand so that we would walk in them. Ephesians 2:10

God's grace appeared in order to illuminate salvation and teach us to live differently; to deny the old way of life and embrace a brand new way of living. Paul included a two-fold motivation to live differently.

III. The Motivation to live differently

A. Reflect on (anticipate) the future appearing of Jesus

looking for the blessed hope and the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior, Christ Jesus, Titus 2:13

This is similar to Peter's motivation to hope completely on the grace to be brought to us. We live in the present with an eye on the future. How we live here today affects how we live hereafter.

B. Remember the sacrifice of Jesus in the past

Jesus voluntarily gave His life to accomplish two things.

1. In order to redeem us from the old life and every lawless deed

who gave Himself for us to redeem us from every lawless deed

The word "redeem" is to rescue or pay to by our freedom.

And you were dead in your trespasses and sins, in which you formerly walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, of the spirit that is now working in the sons of disobedience. Among them we too all formerly lived in the lusts of our flesh, indulging the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, even as the rest. Ephesians 2:1-3

The only way to change our external behavior is to change our internal core.

For from within, out of the heart of men, proceed the evil thoughts, fornications, thefts, murders, adulteries, deeds of coveting and wickedness, as well as deceit, sensuality, envy, slander, pride and foolishness. Mark 7:21-22

Jesus made it possible to live differently by renewing our heart.

2. In order to purify us to live a new life that is zealous for every good deed

Who gave Himself to purify for Himself a people for His own possession, zealous for good deeds. Titus 2:14

Jesus died to cleanse us, purify us. Jesus changed us so that He could relate to us. God works in us so that we not only do His will but we want to do what pleases Him.

It is God who is at work in you, both to will and to work for His good pleasure. Philippians 2:13

Paul told Titus...

These things speak and exhort and reprove with all authority. Let no one disregard you. Titus 2:15

I proclaim these principles today without apology.

Live differently by reflecting on Christ's glorious return so that it will be a joyous event.

Beloved, do not be surprised at the fiery ordeal among you, which comes upon you for your testing, as though some strange thing were happening to you; but to the degree that you share the sufferings of Christ, keep on rejoicing, so that also at the revelation of His glory you may rejoice with exultation. 1 Peter 4:12-13

Now, little children, abide in Him, so that when He appears, we may have confidence and not shrink away from Him in shame at His coming. 1 John 2:28

Which is it going to be rejoicing or shame?

But I (Jesus) have this against you, that you have left your first love. 'Therefore remember from where you have fallen, and repent and do the deeds you did at first; or else I am coming to you and will remove your lampstand out of its place—unless you repent. Rev 2:4-5

For true believers, how we live does not determine our future destiny but it will affect future reward and what we do there. Live differently now by remembering the one who sacrificed Himself in order to free us from the bondage and fruitlessness of the old life and purify us and motivate us to live for Him. This amazing favor of God toward underserving creatures glows with blinding brilliance against the backdrop of wrath, rebellion, judgment and eternal separation from God. Live differently because we are different due to the matchless grace of our loving God and Savior Jesus Christ which He lavished on us. It is amazing. It is glorious, beautiful, mysterious and ultimately unfathomable.

The Father predestined us to adoption as sons through Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the kind intention of His will, to the praise of the glory of His grace, which He freely bestowed on us in the Beloved. Ephesians 1:5-6

When we've been there ten thousand years (experiencing the riches of His grace) bright shining as the sun, we've no less days to sing God's praise than when we've first begun.

Does God's wonderful, amazing, matchless grace still amaze you? Then live like it!!!

DIGGING DEEPER Titus 2 message September 21, 2014

DAY ONE

I offer a prayer today that expresses a desired to be a faithful servant of Christ using various passages addressing faithful service.

Master,

I acknowledge you as the master, the Lord of all the earth. I am your servant! I long to be a faithful servant as described and instructed in your word. I acknowledge that much of the time I would rather be served than serve the needs of others. Help me to hear and address the needs of those you call me to serve. I need your grace and your help to be the kind of servant described in your word. I want to be a servant who is sensitive to the needs of the ones I am called to serve. I want to meet the needs of the ones I serve according to their need not according to my desires. Inspire in me the proper urgency and fear that comes with the responsibility of being a representative of Christ and to serve as he served. Examine the motives of my heart for serving others. Expose any selfish motivations. Cause me to fully realize that my service of others is identical to serving you. As I serve others the same as I would serve you, may it be with fervency and efficiency fully utilizing every resource and talent which you have granted by your grace. I fully appreciate earthly reward but I realize the ultimate reward is recorded and reserved by you in the heavenlies. May my service to others be well pleasing both to them and you. Help me to be cooperative not argumentative. I want to be the kind of person who can be trusted. Stir a deep longing and desire to really serve other believers. Help me to die to self and learn what it means to really put others first. I confess to you my self-centeredness, my pride, my laziness, and my tendency to take the path of least resistance when it comes to serving others, especially those closest to me. I acknowledge that without the power of Christ within, I cannot serve as Christ served and left us an example to following his steps. For that reason I humbly offer these requests to you today. In the name of Christ my Master. Amen!

A good exercise today might be to read through the entire letter to Titus. So many dismiss any discussion of works in fear of appearing to be legalistic. The New Testament makes it clear that salvation is not and never will be by works. However, works play an integral place in our salvation.

So then, my beloved, just as you have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your salvation with fear and trembling; for it is God who is at work in you, both to will and to work for His good pleasure. Philippians 2:12-13

Paul followed that verse with instruction on just how to do that. We are definitely saved by God on the basis of His grace and our faith. Genuine faith or believe includes a behavioral component. As you read through Paul's letter to Titus watch for the referenced to belief, grace and works or behavior.

Take some time to reflect on the two illustrations referenced in the message.

First – the music (behavior) and lyrics (truth of the Gospel) illustration.

Second – the “fashion” illustration demonstrating the place of works or behavior in the Christian's life. How does your life “adorn” the Gospel?

Remember, God is our refuge in trouble.

Your O Lord are my refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. Therefore I will not fear, though the earth should change and though the mountains slip into the heart of the sea; though its waters roar and foam, though the mountains quake at its swelling pride. Selah. There is a river whose streams make glad the city of God, the holy dwelling places of the Most High. You are in the midst of her, she will not be moved; You will help her when morning dawns. Psalm 46:1-5

Your will help me today.

DAY TWO

In light of all the turmoil raging around the globe, remember who still reigns.

Sing praises to God, sing praises; Sing praises to our King, sing praises. For God is the King of all the earth; Sing praises with a skillful psalm. God reigns over the nations, God sits on His holy throne. The princes of the people have assembled themselves as the people of the God of Abraham, for the shields of the earth belong to God; He is highly exalted. Psalm 47:6-9

Paul instructed young pastor Titus.

But as for you, speak the things which are fitting for sound teaching. Titus 2:1

Following that admonition, Paul outlined some things Titus was to speak to the various groups in the congregation.

Today, identify those groups and connect the specific character traits each one was to develop. I.e. Older men, Older women

Take some time to reflect on those characteristics and how things would be different if they were taken seriously by the various groups today.

Take some time then to use this passage to pray for each of the groups. Take more time for personal application in whatever group you fit.

I.e. Father, may our older men be temperate, dignified... May the older women learn to...

Review the layout of the argument of the passage offered in the box toward the beginning of the sermon notes. It is important to follow the logical connections because it is truly the logic of the Holy Spirit who inspired it. Those connections answer the basic questions who, what, why, where, when, how.

Finally, if you have more time, review the six setting of Grace along with the verses that go with them.

DAY THREE

Isaiah urged the people to give attention to serving others. He mentions fasting which allows us to concentrate on things of eternal value. He speaks for God. This is what God feels.

"Is this not the fast which I choose, to loosen the bonds of wickedness, to undo the bands of the yoke, and to let the oppressed go free and break every yoke? Is it not to divide your bread with the hungry and bring the homeless poor into the house; when you see the naked, to cover him; and not to hide yourself from your own flesh? Isaiah 58:6-7

Following this divine inquiry from 8-12 are a whole list of blessings that are promises as a result of this selfless service to others. Make a list. Are these things you want in your life.

The point Paul wants Titus to emphasize is the relationship between blessing and life-change. Grace appeared and brought salvation.

Grace appeared and continually teaches us to cast off the old and put on the new.

The repeated point of this passage has to do with how the children of grace should live differently.

First revisit the notes and verses provided. Open your heart to the Spirit's nudging along the way. What kind of deeds demonstrates a "FIRST LOVE" for Jesus?

Jesus addressed the powerful church that had been established in Ephesus.

'I know your deeds and your toil and perseverance, and that you cannot tolerate evil men, and you put to the test those who call themselves apostles, and they are not, and you found them to be false; and you have perseverance and have endured for My name's sake, and have not grown weary. But I have this against you, that you have left your first love. Therefore remember from where you have fallen, and repent and do the deeds you did at first; or else I am coming to you and will remove your lampstand out of its place—unless you repent. Revelation 2:2-5

It appears from history that their powerful witness did come to an end.

Paul's pattern in this passage is clear. On the basis of God's great grace we...

Are to deny ungodliness and worldly desires.

Were redeemed from every lawless deed.

On the "flip side" we...

Are to live sensibly, righteously and godly in the present age.

Were purified as a people zealous for good deeds.

The motivation for all this is twofold.

1. By reflecting on the glorious appearing of Christ
2. By remembering the sacrifice Jesus voluntarily gave on our behalf.

This pattern of put off old behavior and put on new behavior on the basis of the work of grace in our life appears often in the New Testament.

The rest of the week I will suggest several passages to consider.

Take some time to study Ephesians 4:17-5:21

Make two columns on a piece of paper labeling the first column "Old Clothes" and the other "New Clothes". As you examine the passage list the characteristics of our B.C. (Before Christ) life and our A.C. (After Christ) life.

DAY FOUR

Isaiah mentioned another valuable practice besides fasting to sacrificially serve others. It is found in Isaiah 58.

"If because of the sabbath, you turn your foot From doing your own pleasure on My holy day, and call the sabbath a delight, the holy day of the LORD honorable, And honor it, desisting from your own ways, From seeking your own pleasure And speaking your own word, Then you will take delight in the LORD, and I will make you ride on the heights of the earth; And I will feed you with the heritage of Jacob your father, For the mouth of the LORD has spoken." Isaiah 58:13-14

This is God's prescription for "remembering the Sabbath". Whether you set Sunday as a day to concentrate on the things of God or any other day really doesn't matter. What matters, is that we set aside time dedicated to serving God. Take some time to look at God's criteria for a fruitful Sabbath.

Question one – Have we even established such a time?

Questions two – What is my activity and attitude for that time?

Back to the wardrobe or fashion of a child of God.

Another major passage in this regard is Col 3:1-17.

Again make two columns and list the things on each side "Old" , "New".

God's continual work in our life has to do with working OUT (not for) our salvation.

Why should we live out what God has worked in? That is God's activity in our daily life.

This is what God saved us for.

For we are His workmanship (creative masterpiece / poem), created in Christ Jesus for good works (to live differently), which God prepared beforehand so that we would walk in them. Ephesians 2:10

Who gave Himself to purify for Himself a people for His own possession, zealous for good deeds. Titus 2:14

It is God who is at work in you, both to will and to work for His good pleasure. Philippians 2:13

DAY FIVE

Ok, I have worked you hard this week. These are major passages that emphasize the most logical response to God's amazing grace in our life – to live pleasing to Him.

Whatever you do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks through Him to God the Father. Colossians 3:17

Whether, then, you eat or drink or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God. 1 Corinthians 10:31

Romans 1-8 detail the mysterious and marvelous details of how sinful man can be restored to intimate relationship with a holy God. How can the unrighteous fellowship with the absolutely righteous?

After a brief interlude dealing with the question of where Israel fits in all this, Paul then calls for reflection and application in the rest of the book.

Therefore I urge you, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living and holy sacrifice, acceptable to God, which is your spiritual service of worship. And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, so that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect. Romans 12:1-2

Notice the use of the put off and put on formula.

Notice basis on which we should stop being conformed to this world but be transformed is the MERCIES OF GOD.

Following then is a description of what this new transformed thinking and living looks like.

Follow all the way to the end of the letter and list what true love and true Christian living looks like.

Am I being conformed to this world's way of doing things or being transformed to God's way of doing things?

It is God plan that every chosen follower of Jesus be like Jesus.

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ, just as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we would be holy and blameless before Him. In love He predestined us to adoption as sons through Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the kind intention of His will, to the praise of the glory of His grace, which He freely bestowed on us in the Beloved. Ephesians 1:3-6

Do not love the world nor the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh and the lust of the eyes and the boastful pride of life, is not from the Father, but is from the world. The world is passing away, and also its lusts; but the one who does the will of God lives forever. 1 John 2:15-17

Finally, Jesus died to purify a people zealous for good works.

How zealous are we to deny ungodliness and worldly desires and to live sensibly, righteously and godly in the present age, looking for the blessed hope and the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior, Christ Jesus... **Titus 2:12-13**

Will we be among those who shrink away in shame at His coming?

Jesus addressed a church full of lukewarm followers.

"To the angel of the church in Laodicea write: The Amen, the faithful and true Witness, the Beginning of the creation of God, says this: 'I know your deeds, that you are neither cold nor hot; I wish that you were cold or hot. 'So because you are lukewarm, and neither hot nor cold, I will spit you out of My mouth. 'Because you say, "I am rich, and have become wealthy, and have need of nothing," and you do not know that you are wretched and miserable and poor and blind and naked, I advise you to buy from Me gold refined by fire so that you may become rich, and white garments so that you may clothe yourself, and that the shame of your nakedness will not be revealed; and eye salve to anoint your eyes so that you may see. 'Those whom I love, I reprove and discipline; therefore be zealous and repent. 'Behold, I stand at the door and knock; if anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and will dine with him, and he with Me. 'He who overcomes, I will grant to him to sit down with Me on My throne, as I also overcame and sat down with My Father on His throne. 'He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.'" Revelation 3:14-22

Could this be the American church today?

I pray that it would not be us.

Pray for a new zeal to serve God in our church family today.

Pray for a new passion to live in such a way that the people see our good works and glorify our father in heaven.