

Practical Guidance

Titus 2:13-15

Intro

[expand — youtube video where Tom Brady instructs the viewer on how to throw a football — he takes the viewer through the *steps* and *disciplines* involved — he gives ***practical guidance***...]

*When it comes to this idea of ***practical guidance*** in the life of a believer, Dallas Willard writes these words in his book, ***The Spirit of the Disciplines***...*

“...most of us find great difficulty in translating ‘abiding in Christ and his words abiding in us’ into familiar events of our daily lives. Yet this is precisely what must be done. It is the central task for those who would guide us as ministers of the gospel. We are dealing here with the essence of the new life from above...Our most serious failure today is the inability to provide effective practical guidance as to how to live the life of Jesus.”

If we are to be *doers of the word and not hearers only* then we must seek ***practical guidance*** on how to live out the instruction of the Scriptures in our ***real lives*** — in the lives ***we are actually living***...

- And I believe that this sort of ***practical guidance*** is what we will find in our passage today — ***practical guidance*** that will aid us as we seek to walk in relationship with our God...[expand]

With this in mind, would you please follow along as we read...

Titus 2:11-15 (NKJV)

11 For the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men,

12 teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in the present age,

13 looking for the blessed hope and glorious appearing of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ,

14 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.

15 Speak these things, exhort, and rebuke with all authority. Let no one despise you.

We worked our way through vs 11-12 last week and we will study vs 13-15 this morning — let's move into our first section...

1) Looking & Appearing (vs 13)

*In this section we will see that the **looking** is our responsibility and the **appearing** is the Lord's responsibility...*

13 looking for the blessed hope and glorious appearing of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ,

looking — *looking forward to the fulfillment of an expectation...*

- [ex. looking forward to Christmas morning when you were young...]

Now, as believers we must have a reason for looking forward in expectation — we must be looking forward to something real...

- [ex. Christmas Day was real — it was on the calendar — it was on the way...]

And as children we cultivated the expectation of Christmas — we looked at toy catalogs — we counted down the days...

Romans 10:17 (NKJV)

So then faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.

We grow in faith by reading the Word of God — we stir up a longing to be with Christ by encountering Him in the Bible and then by faith we pursue a growing relationship with Him...

Continuing on in Titus 2:13...

looking for the blessed hope

blessed — *possessing the favor of God, that state of being marked by fullness from God...*

hope — *desire of some good with expectation of obtaining it...*

The Lord Jesus Himself is our **blessed hope** — He is the One who is marked by the fulness of God — He Himself is the Good that we are expecting to obtain...

It is also important for us to come to grips with the fact that the Lord Jesus Himself is not simply our **blessed hope** — *He is also our only hope...*

- [ex. Star Wars — “Obi-Wan, you’re our only hope”...]

The harsh reality is that everything and everyone in this life is **fallen** — everything and everyone is **breaking down** — nothing and no one in this life is worthy of **being our hope...**

- And when we put our hope in the people and possessions of this world **they will fail us** — because they were never meant to be our hope...

The Bible has a word for this false hope that we put in people and possessions — it is called idolatry...

- And sooner or later all idols fail — because they cannot carry the weight of our **hope** — of our expectation for something eternal — for something our someone that will be good, always...

***Look around and be distressed,
Look inside and be depressed,
Look to Christ and be at rest.***

Psalm 42:5 (NKJV)

Why are you cast down, O my soul?

And why are you disquieted within me?

Hope in God, for I shall yet praise Him

For the help of His countenance.

- So, **looking** forward expectantly to the Lord Jesus — our **blessed hope** — is our responsibility...

But it is the Lord Jesus' responsibility to gloriously appear...

looking for the blessed hope and glorious appearing

- [ex. someone trustworthy tells you that they are going to show up — you can trust them to do what they say...]

Now, does this **glorious appearing** refer to ***the Rapture of the Church*** or to ***the Second Coming***?

I'm not sure — but we should look forward to both!!!

With this in mind, please turn to...

1 Thessalonians 4:15-18 (NKJV)

15 For this we say to you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive and remain until the coming of the Lord will by no means precede those who are asleep.

16 For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first.

17 Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And thus we shall always be with the Lord.

18 Therefore comfort one another with these words.

Now, please turn to...

Revelation 19:11-16 (NKJV)

11 Now I saw heaven opened, and behold, a white horse. And He who sat on him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness He judges and makes war.

12 His eyes were like a flame of fire, and on His head were many crowns. He had a name written that no one knew except Himself.

13 He was clothed with a robe dipped in blood, and His name is called The Word of God.

14 And the armies in heaven, clothed in fine linen, white and clean, followed Him on white horses.

15 Now out of His mouth goes a sharp sword, that with it He should strike the nations. And He Himself will rule them with a rod of iron. He Himself treads the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God.

16 And He has on His robe and on His thigh a name written:

**KING OF KINGS AND
LORD OF LORDS.**

As believers, we should be looking forward to the Rapture of the church and the Second Coming of Christ...

- Because as believers we will each participate both in the Rapture and in the Second Coming!!!...

Please turn back to Titus 2 as we continue on to the end of vs 13...

looking for the blessed hope and glorious appearing of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ,

- [expand — all modern translations that I looked at translated this verse in this way — Granville Sharp rule...]

So, in this verse the Apostle Paul clearly teaches the deity of the Lord Jesus Christ...

- [expand on the Trinity — Father, Son, Spirit — each a full member of the godhead...]

Question — If the Lord Jesus isn't God then who is He?...

- [ex. C.S. Lewis — Mere Christianity — Liar, Lunatic, or Lord...]

“I am trying here to prevent anyone saying the really foolish thing that people often say about Him: ‘I’m ready to accept Jesus as a great moral teacher, but I don’t accept His claim to be God.’ That is the one thing we must not say. A man who was merely a man and said the sort of things Jesus said would not be a great moral teacher. He would either be a lunatic—on a level with the man who says he is a poached egg—or else he would be the Devil of Hell. You must make your choice. Either this man was, and is, the Son of God: or else a madman or something worse. You can shut Him up for a fool, you can spit at Him and kill Him as a demon; or you can fall at His feet and call Him Lord and God. But let us not come with any patronising nonsense about His being a great human teacher. He has not left that open to us. He did not intend to.”

Let's look once again at this phrase...

great God and Savior Jesus Christ

great God — *great in power, dignity, authority...*

Savior — *One who rescues, a deliverer...*

Our great God and Savior Jesus Christ *delivered us* from the ***punishment*** of sin — He continually ***delivers us*** from the ***power*** of sin — He ***will deliver us*** from the ***presence*** of sin...

Our Great God and Savior Jesus Christ delivers us from a life of hopelessness — from a life of meaninglessness...

*And it is important to remember that as believers we have continual access to **Our Great God and Savior Jesus Christ...***

To remind ourselves of this wonderful truth, please turn to...

Hebrews 4:14-16 (NKJV)

14 Seeing then that we have a great High Priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession.

15 For we do not have a High Priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but was in all points tempted as we are, yet without sin.

16 Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

QUESTION — Are you trying to do life on your own? Do you see the Lord Jesus as the Savior who saved you in the past but now it is up to you?...

If so, please remember what the Lord Jesus offered in...

Matthew 11:28-30 (NKJV)

28 “Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.

29 Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls.

30 For My yoke is easy and My burden is light.”

Our great God and Savior Jesus Christ is an ever-present help in time of need — He is offering an easy yoke and a light burden — but we must be willing to do things His way...

Please turn back to Titus 2 as we move into vs...

2) Giving & Working (vs 14)

Giving

14 who gave Himself for us,

*Here the Lord Jesus is defined by **giving** — He **gave** Himself for us...*

Matthew 20:28 (NKJV)

“...the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many.”

Through giving His life, the Lord Jesus is the giver of eternal life...

John 10:27-28 (NKJV)

27 “My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me.

28 And I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; neither shall anyone snatch them out of My hand.”

The Lord Jesus is also the giver of peace...

John 14:27 (NKJV)

“Peace I leave with you, My peace I give to you; not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid.”

Now, as we continue on in Titus 2:14 we see that the Lord Jesus gave Himself for us...

that He might redeem us from every lawless deed and purify for Himself His own special people,

redeem — *to liberate from an oppressive situation, set free, rescue...*

redeem us from every lawless deed

*So, the death of the Lord Jesus **redeems us from every lawless deed** in at least two ways...*

1) We are redeemed from the punishment that those sins deserve...

2) We are redeemed from the bondage that those sins create in our lives...

John 8:34-36 (NKJV)

34 Jesus answered them, "Most assuredly, I say to you, whoever commits sin is a slave of sin.

35 And a slave does not abide in the house forever, but a son abides forever.

36 Therefore if the Son makes you free, you shall be free indeed."

- [expand — we do not have to live as slaves of sin any longer — we have been set free...]

Continuing on in vs 14...

that He might redeem us from every lawless deed and purify for Himself His own special people,

The Lord Jesus redeemed us so that He might **purify** us — *cleanse us* — so that we might be **His own special people** — a people set aside for relationship with Him — set aside for His special purposes...

- You see, the Lord Jesus did not redeem us so that we might be ***given to ourselves*** — He redeemed us from every lawless deed and purified us so that ***He might give us to Himself...***

And we must understand that Jesus giving us to Himself this is the best possible life!...

It is a life of being set free from the punishment and power of sin so that we might be a people who are brought into relationship with the Lord Jesus for His purposes and plans...

- Think about it — the best person who ever lived died for you to set you free from sin and has now brought you into a position of ever-increasing fellowship with Himself...

What could be better?...

But wait — there's more — and this bring us to the end of Titus 2:14...

Working

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.

The Lord Jesus *redeemed us* and is *purifying us* and has *set us apart* as His own special people and in the midst of all that He wants us to be **zealous for good works**...

zealous — *one who is earnestly committed to a side or cause, enthusiast, adherent, loyalist...*

- [ex. radical commitment to a sports team // imagine being that dedicated to good works — wearing a good works jersey...]

As a people who are increasingly zealous for good works, here are some verse that we should meditate on...

Matthew 5:16 (NKJV)

“Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven.”

Ephesians 2:10 (NKJV)

For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them.

James 2:18 (NKJV)

**But someone will say, "You have faith, and I have works."
Show me your faith without your works, and I will show you my faith by my works.**

By being zealous for good works we are participating in the life of God — we get to be active participants in the work God is doing in our day...

This brings us to our third and final section...

3) Speaking, Exhorting & Rebuking (vs 15)

In this final verse of Titus 2, Paul exhorts Titus to...

15 Speak these things, exhort, and rebuke with all authority. Let no one despise you.

In other words, Titus was not to keep these things to himself but to share them in his role as an elder — and the idea is that Titus was to ***continually*** speak, exhort, and rebuke...

- [expand — tendency to shy away from sharing uncomfortable truth...]

If we are hesitant about sharing truth when the Lord provides open doors, we would do well to meditate on...

2 Timothy 1:7-8 (NKJV)

7 For God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a sound mind.

8 Therefore do not be ashamed of the testimony of our Lord, nor of me His prisoner, but share with me in the sufferings for the gospel according to the power of God,

Continuing on in Titus 2:15, Paul commands to...

exhort, and rebuke with all authority.

exhort — *to urge strongly, appeal to, encourage...*

rebuke — *to scrutinize or examine carefully, bring to light, expose, set forth...*

with all authority — *with full authority to command...*

REMINDER — The elder's authority rests in the nature of his message and his calling...[expand]

- [ex. Elders are similar to captains on a sports team — they are to lead and make decisions for the good of the team...]

Now to the final part of vs 15, we read...

Let no one despise you.

despise — *to have disdain for, disregard, look down on...*

- [expand — Elders should refuse to cave in to dissenters // ex. Stephen before the religious leaders...]

Paul's instruction to Titus reminds me of the LORD's instruction to Joshua when it was time for Joshua to lead the Israelites...

Joshua 1:7-9 (NKJV) *[the LORD speaking to Joshua...]*

7 “Only be strong and very courageous, that you may observe to do according to all the law which Moses My servant commanded you; do not turn from it to the right hand or to the left, that you may prosper wherever you go.

8 This Book of the Law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate in it day and night, that you may observe to do according to all that is written in it. For then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have good success.

9 Have I not commanded you? Be strong and of good courage; do not be afraid, nor be dismayed, for the LORD your God is with you wherever you go.”

Conclusion

Now, as we begin to wind down our time I hope that you have received some more practical guidance as you seek to live out your life in fellowship with Christ...

And I believe that the formula for practical guidance is relatively simple — seek to understand the truth of the Word of God and then when the Word of God tells you to do something — just do it...

With this in mind, I will close our time together with one of the most helpful passages in the NT when it comes to the subject of practical guidance...

If we diligently seek to understand and apply this passage to our daily lives then we will experience tremendous growth in our walk with Christ...

Please turn to...

Colossians 3:1-17 (NKJV)

1 If then you were raised with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ is, sitting at the right hand of God.

2 Set your mind on things above, not on things on the earth.

3 For you died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God.

4 When Christ who is our life appears, then you also will appear with Him in glory.

5 Therefore put to death your members which are on the earth: fornication, uncleanness, passion, evil desire, and covetousness, which is idolatry.

6 Because of these things the wrath of God is coming upon the sons of disobedience,

7 in which you yourselves once walked when you lived in them.

8 But now you yourselves are to put off all these: anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy language out of your mouth.

9 Do not lie to one another, since you have put off the old man with his deeds,

10 and have put on the new man who is renewed in knowledge according to the image of Him who created him,

11 where there is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcised nor uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave nor free, but Christ is all and in all.

12 Therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, put on tender mercies, kindness, humility, meekness, longsuffering;

13 bearing with one another, and forgiving one another, if anyone has a complaint against another; even as Christ forgave you, so you also must do.

14 But above all these things put on love, which is the bond of perfection.

15 And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to which also you were called in one body; and be thankful.

16 Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom, teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord.

17 And whatever you do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through Him.