

**Basis For Conduct Consistent With Sound Biblical Doctrine: An Exegetical Study Of
Titus 2:11-14**

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Abstract

After going through conduct consistent to sound doctrine for all the members of the household, Apostle Paul set theological foundations of the conduction using the Gospel Framework; The coming of Christ, His work of Redemption and his ultimate return to take the Church. Using a historical grammatical methodology, this study examines in depth Titus 2:11-14 and its application for all believers. In Titus 2:11-14, Apostle Paul teaches the Appearance of grace for all people in the past (Titus 2:11), the teaching ministry of grace in the present (Titus 12), the appearance of the Great God and Savior in the future (Titus 13) who sacrifice purchases a zeal people (Titus 2:14).

Key Words: Grace, Salvation, Teaching, Sound Doctrine, Conduct.

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Introduction

The relationship between Christian conduct and sound doctrine is the soul and heart of the Christian faith. Paul describes this inextricable link by describing Titus 2:11-14 as the theological underpinning of the Christian conduct expected from old men, younger men, old women, young men and slaves. In doing so he looks to redemptive work of Christ in the past, present and future as the source of strength and enablement for the believer. Using the Historical-grammatical methodology, this study unpacks theological assertions with the purpose of revealing how grace was revealed in the past (manifested as Christ) (v.11), how it is pedagogical in the present (v.12) and culminating in the return of Christ in the future. vv13-14. Central to this study is the affirmation of Christ as the “The great God and Savior” by defending the application of the Granville sharp rule. Lastly the study seeks because Christ in the past saved us, because of the ongoing teaching ministry of grace and the future, which is our glorification, we are to live a life consistent to sound doctrine.

Statement of the Problem

A competent study of Titus 2:11-14 will provide a better understanding of the basis for conduct consistent with sound Biblical doctrine for various groups and hence depict a better relationship between Christian doctrine and Christian living.

Exegetical Issues

1. The phrase “*πᾶσιν ἀνθρώποις*” in vv11 and its meaning in relation to salvation.
2. The grammatical construction of “*τοῦ μεγάλου θεοῦ καὶ σωτῆρος ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ*” in vv13 and its Christological implications.
3. The teaching ministry of Grace in vv12

Objective of the Study

To investigate the basis for conduct consistent with sound biblical doctrine expected from various groups in Titus 2:1-10.

Historical Context

The Epistle to Titus was written by Paul from the testimony of scriptures, Titus was a Greek Christian who is said to have gone with Paul to Jerusalem and wasn't compelled to be circumcised (Galatians 2:3). Although not much is said about his personal life, we know that he was one of Paul's co-workers together with Timothy (Titus 1:4; 2 Corinthians 8:16.)

Titus was serving alongside Paul as early as 48-49 AD (Fee, 1989, p. 22). He is mentioned in 2 Corinthians 8:6, 16-17 and delivered the letter sent by Paul to this church. Titus is also mentioned in the last epistle written by Paul in 2 Timothy 4:10 to have gone to do ministry in Dalmatia and from that we can deduce that Titus' mission in Crete came to an end before the death of Paul.

Titus received this letter while on mission on the Island of Crete. This island is believed to have been the birthplace of the Greek mythical god Zeus. The Bible records of a stop at Fairhaven in Crete by Paul and other prisoners on their way to Rome. It was a political

province of the Roman empire after it was conquered by the Romans in 67BC (Jeffers, 1999, 273).

In the Epistle itself, Titus is left in Crete to put in order what was left and to appoint elders in every town (Titus 1:5). Paul also goes on to describe the people in the Island of Crete saying, “one of their prophets Epimenides as “lairs, evil beasts, lazy gluttons (Titus 1:16).”

Literal Context

Titus 2:11-14 is sandwiched between two chapters namely, chapter 1 and chapter 3. In chapter 1, the author weaved two distinct parts with one thread namely, doing what is good. He tells Titus of two important responsibilities that necessitated his stay in Crete. The first one being the unfinished task and the second being appointing elders who are faithful husbands, self-controlled, and disciplined. Titus should be sound in doctrine with the ability to refute those who oppose true doctrine, and he must also be one who loves to do what is good.

Paul goes on to condemn those whom he calls “rebellious people” characterised by false doctrine, teaching for the sake of dishonest gains. Paul compares them to lazy evil brutes and lastly says that they are detestable, disobedient, and unfit for anything good.

In the third chapter, Paul argues that Christians are to be reminded of having great relations with the authorities and being ready to do every good work. In verse 4-7, Paul highlights the kindness and love of our God and saviour manifested in the appearance of Jesus Christ, the justification and the grace as means to salvation and not works. He explains regeneration by the Holy Spirit as the ultimate source of the good works expected from believers

The Greek Text

11 Ἐπεφάνη γὰρ ἡ χάρις τοῦ Θεοῦ σωτήριος πᾶσιν ἀνθρώποις 12 παιδεύουσα ἡμᾶς, ἵνα ἀρνησάμενοι τὴν ἀσέβειαν καὶ τὰς κοσμικὰς ἐπιθυμίας σωφρόνως καὶ δικαίως καὶ εὐσεβῶς ζήσωμεν ἐν τῷ νῦν αἰῶνι, 13 προσδεχόμενοι τὴν μακαρίαν ἐλπίδα καὶ ἐπιφάνειαν τῆς δόξης τοῦ μεγάλου Θεοῦ καὶ σωτῆρος ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ, 14 ὃς ἔδωκεν ἑαυτὸν ὑπὲρ ἡμῶν ἵνα λυτρώσεται ἡμᾶς ἀπὸ πάσης ἀνομίας καὶ καθάρσῃ ἑαυτῷ λαὸν περιούσιον, ζηλωτὴν καλῶν ἔργων (Holmes, 2010, p. 492).

My Translation.

Exegesis Verse by Verse Titus 2: 11-14

11 Ἐπεφάνη γὰρ ἡ χάρις τοῦ Θεοῦ σωτήριος πᾶσιν ἀνθρώποις
For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation for all people.

The word γὰρ structurally holds so much weight in connecting the hortatory statements that it precedes with the theological basis for those statements. For Mounce this conjunctive γὰρ serves as the reason behind the ethical injunctions in verse 1 up to verse 10. This shows ethics in this Pastoral Letter grows out of the awareness of God’s salvific work for the believers (Mounce, 2000, p. 1212).

Paul continues this with the epistle using an aorist verb for ἐπιφαίνω which is translated as “appeared.” I find this to be a summary/complexive aorist since it refers to the Christ’s incarnation, life, and ministry. This is because of its placement which makes it emphatic and stressing the manifestation of grace as a historical fact, secondly because its

commonly used to refer to Christ in PE either for incarnation or the second coming. (Fee, n.d., p. 152)

What has appeared is ἡ χάρις τοῦ Θεοῦ. A genitive construction like these demands care especially because of the presence of an N-Ng (noun-noun genitive) (Grace of God). Grace in this case is an “attributed genitive” explaining the quality attributed to grace by the noun (God) which it is describing. In other words, “God’s gracious” action revealed in the life, death and resurrection of Christ who is the one that appeared. (Kelly, 1981, p. 244) Knight also supports the attributed genitive in saying that “the grace of God... is God’s gracious intention towards mind kind” (Knight III, 1992, p. 318).

The next question to answer in translating 11b is this, the appearing and salvation are for who? or to whom the appearing meant to profit.

Most occurrences of this the word σωτηρία translated as “salvation” appears as a noun. And in these cases, when used in NT, it denotes deliverance, preservation, or salvation. When it appears as σωτήριος it is translated as “bringing salvation.” (Vine, 1981, p. 317). This is far from “healthy” which is used in NEB (Hanson, 1966, p. 115). I think “bringing salvation” keeps the soteriological language seen in the unit.

Once one settles that the meaning of “The grace of God has appeared,” the next issues is the dative in πᾶσιν ἀνθρώποις. Since I take the dative to be of indirect object, my translation came out as “for all people.”

One may ask what should “for all people” be connected to ? The best options are to connect it to σωτήριος or to Ἐπεφάνη.

KJV and NIV connects πᾶσιν ἀνθρώποις to Ἐπεφάνη which translates as “the grace of God has appeared to all men” in support for the NIV translation Lea and Griffin argue that Paul stated that God’s salvation (characterize by his grace) “appeared” at a given time ... for all men (Jews, gentiles, free and slaves) (Lea & Griffin, Jr, n. d., p. 310). This seems to be a minor voice though, in fact one that is rejected by Fee when he says that “Paul does not say that this grace appeared to all men; rather, as almost all other translations have it and as both Paul’s word order and the usage in 1 Timothy 2:3-6) demand it (Fee, 1988, p. 194).

Ngewa raises a good question in asking, “what does Paul mean when he speaks of salvation having appeared “for all people?”

With Calvin, this statement does not refer to all people as individuals. Instead, it is to all people groups, slaves included. This is hinged on the contextual proximity of verse 9 and 10. He highlights his point by stating that “Yet he (Paul) does not mean individual men, but rather describes individual classes, or various ranks of life” (Calvin, 2007, p. 373).

While Banker would agree with Calvin that this salvation is available to all men in the groups in Titus 2:2-10, He suggests that since all people includes all classes of people and since the matter of all classes of people is not focal to the theme of 2:11-14, it should be rendered as simple “all people.”

In his translation, the prominent universalist David Bentley translates this verse as follows “For the grace of God has appeared, giving salvation to all human beings” (*The New Testament*, 2017, p. 360). This clearly shows that Bentley expect that the appearance of this grace gives all humans salvation, although Paul expects some to actively oppose it (Titus 1:10, 15-16). I also find this to be an impossible option since it denies the need to place our faith in Christ which is a central doctrine in the Gospel.

Marshall suggests that there is no implied limitation that would exclude any person from the embrace of the divine grace, and thus seeing it as universal in the literal sense. He see the force to be clear that salvation is intended for all men. (Marshall, 2003, p. 268) This

point is made more clear in this way: “God’s grace is for the salvation of everyone; the last word of the Bible is the word “all”(Boring & Craddock, 2010, p. 2617).

To hinder the quick run to universalism, Ngewa settles it in this way, “Paul is saying that salvation is available to everyone who chooses to accept it... Salvation is available to everyone, but it is only experienced by those who exercise faith in Jesus Christ ”(Ngewa, 2009, p. 383).

All in all, the emphasis and force of this verse is focused on the availability of this grace. It is available for salvific purpose and for pedagogical purposes as explored in the section to follow.

12 παιδεύουσα ἡμᾶς, ἵνα ἀρνησάμενοι τὴν ἀσέβειαν καὶ τὰς κοσμικὰς ἐπιθυμίας σωφρόνως καὶ δικαίως καὶ εὐσεβῶς ζήσωμεν ἐν τῷ νῦν αἰῶνι,
Teaching us that having denied the ungodliness and worldly passions, we should live in a self-controlled manner, justly and godly in the present age,

In his discussion on grace and its work, Paul turns from the past to the present. In the past this grace appeared bring salvation for all men but in the present the grace is παιδεύουσα. Grace is working in the continuous manner in the ministry of παιδεύουσα. Although it’s rendered as teaching in my translation, the word παιδεύω covers a range of meaning including to instruct, bring up, discipline, and educate.(Bauer, 2001, p. 608) In other words, it’s more like a father teaching his young son on matters of life.

This teaching which is the grammatical nucleus of Titus 2:12-13,(Banker, 1987, p. 94) takes both negative and positive stances. This is close to a language of “Two way” found in other early Christian epistles like the Didache 1-6 and the epistle of Barnabas.(Mounce, 2000, p. 1214)

The first negative stance is ἀρνέομαι which would literally mean to say “no” or to deny. In this verse it is acting as a particle of ζήσωμεν and its tense is better represented in translating it as “having denied” since the verb is subordinate and looks forward to ζήσωμεν. The call for denial is mainly for two things: ἀσέβειαν and κοσμικὰς ἐπιθυμίας. ἀσέβειαν, which comes from ἀσέβεια, meaning (ungodliness) (Bauer, 1957, p. 114) combines all conduct associated with the disbelief in God which may include idol worship (Marshall, 2003, p. 270). It is a direct opposite of εὐσεβῶς found in the same verse.

For Kelly, the strong and decisive language here is considered to be an allusion to baptism on the grounds that the aorist and participle construction here depicts a once-for-all action.(Kelly, 1981, p. 245) I don’t think this conclusion is supported by the context. Ngewa suggests that it is preferable to interpret the aorist as summarizing all the actions involved in changing from a life of vice to a life of virtue (Ngewa, 2009, p. 461). In agreement with Oberlinner, Marshall argues that the thought cannot be limited to the event (either conversion or baptism) but must a continual turning away from godlessness (Marshall, 2003, p. 270).

In general, ἐπιθυμία, which denotes (passion), can be a neutral term as applied in Revelation 18:14, Mark 4:19. It can act as a positive word as applied in Luke 22: 15; 1Thessalonians 2:17; Philippians 1:23 and as a negative word as applied 2 Timothy 2:22 and elsewhere. Connecting (passion) with κοσμικὰς which is a pejorative term makes it negative (Collins, 2002, p. 351). In doing so the author creates a strong negative encapsulating phrase for everything bad the Christians in Crete, Paul, Titus, and Christians are being taught to continuously deny or Say “NO” to. Chrysostom gives chilling advice to matters of renouncing a worldly life in saying “worldly passions are directed towards things that perish with the present life. Let us then have nothing to do with these (Gorday & Oden, 2000, p.

299). Renouncing evil is not enough in the context of Titus 2. It should be followed by a different way of life. This passage contrasts the vices explain above with virtues of the Christian life.

Ζήσωμεν is 1st person plural and continues the inclusive language that was started with in v11. It is the nucleus of this part of the verse, with three adverbs occurring before it and the repetitive “kai” between the adverbs indicate the prominence in the Greek text (Banker, 1987, p. 96).

The question is how we should live. Paul argues that in view of the appearance of the grace of God, we should live σωφρόνως translated as “self-controlled manner” repeats the earlier appeal to the Cretans shown in verses 2, 5 and 6. Living life in a self-control manner is the opposite of living life controlled by worldly passions since in it one is able control these passions.

As if living in a self-controlled manner is not enough, Paul argues that Christians should live δικάως (justly or righteously). In my own translation I took justly, since the word “justly” brings about the justice language carried in δικάως. It is the same word employed in 1 Peter 2:23 and Luke 23:14. In this case it is describing the positive way we are expected to live but in the sense of legal standing. In view of the justice language depicted here, it wouldn’t be a farfetched call for Christian to be right before earthly laws and God’s laws.

The last adverb in the three is εὐσεβῶς coming from the adjective (εὐσεβής). Vine suggests that the word denoted here is piety, which is characterizes by a Godward attitude, or rather doing that which is well pleasing to God (Vine, 1981, p. 162). With the last two adverbs (δικαίως and εὐσεβῶς), Christians are called to live right before God and before men and in a godly manner.

Towner suggests that the three adverbs (σωφρόνως, δικάως and εὐσεβῶς) are popular in the Hellenistic ethics and represent the three out of the four cardinal virtues of life.(P. H. Towner, 2006, p. 749)

This is no surprise to Knight since to him Paul who seeks to be all things to all and used the language of his opponents to appeal to the Cretans.(Knight III, 1992, p. 321)

Paul makes the locus of the manner of living in the νῦν αἰῶνι. NET, NASB, NIV renders this to be “present age” while KJV, RSV, NJB renders it as “Present world.”

Kelly comments that the present age understanding is enshrined in the Jewish-Christian belief that the present order is under the dominion of evils powers.(Kelly, 1981, p. 245) In this case it stands in contrast with the future age which is characterised by the appearing of the saviour (Marshall, 2003, p. 272).

I find Barclay’s connection of the incarnation and moral ethics to be powerful. He suggests that the incarnation of Christ (appearance in verse 11) provides both the moral power necessary to free us from our past and the enabling power to live a perfect life within time (present age) as we look forward for the world to come (Barclay, 1975, p. 257).

One necessary conclusion on this verse is that even though the Cretans and Christians in general are living in the present age which may be corrupted and under the dominion of evils powers, it is possible for them to live in a self-controlled manner, justly, and godly since they are being taught by grace to do so. It is not only possible, but they are called to do so.

13 προσδεχόμενοι τὴν μακαρίαν ἐλπίδα καὶ ἐπιφάνειαν τῆς δόξης τοῦ μεγάλου θεοῦ καὶ σωτῆρος ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ,
waiting for the blessed hope, the appearing of the glory of our great God and saviour Jesus Christ.

Having describe the vices to avoid and virtues to emulate in Christian living in the present world and the enabling power of grace to attain the household code described in v1-10, Paul turns from the present world and calls “us” into an expectant or future looking life. The Cretan are to be προσδεχόμενοι and this is a present participle of the verb προσδέχομαι. The semantic range to this word includes looking (Acts 23:21), receiving (Romans 16:2), accepting (Hebrews 11:35), waiting (Mark 15:43). In describing the confluence of Lukan and Pauline ways of putting things, Witherington acknowledges that this verb can be used in relations to awaiting a divine person or divine action as seen in Luke 2:25, Acts 24:15, Luke 12:36 (III, 2014, p. 178). In this case, “waiting” clearly brings out the continuous state of being for Christians living in the present age/world.

They are waiting for one thing expressed in a hendiadys τὴν μακαρίαν ἐλπίδα καὶ ἐπιφάνειαν. Usually in a hendiadys construction the second noun is explanatory which is why I didn’t have to translate the “kai” in my translation (Hutson, 2019, p. 314). The word μακαρίαν describing hope is said to be a state of bliss, free from earthly worries and cares enjoyed by the Greek gods (Marshall, 2003, p. 273).

The relationship of μακαρίαν to the sentence is highly debated. For Banker, the blessed here refers to the intensity of happiness to be experienced once hope is realized, “hope” being the second coming of our lord Jesus Christ (Banker, 1987, p. 98). This is achieved if one agrees that “hope” in this case is metonymy for second coming. The word “μακαρίαν” may be considered as the object of hope, because of this this since we hope for the blessings (Conzelmann, 1989, p. 143). Considering my understanding of the construction to be a hendiadys, I prefer the first option expressed in the paragraph above.

Having established that what we wait for, I find it necessary to establish what ἐπιφάνειαν τῆς δόξης means in view of this verse. Paul continues with the ἐπιφάνειαν translated as “appearing” in verse. To establish the relationship, some have suggested the genitive construction here to be a Hebraism and for that reason to render the phrase as “The glorious appearing” (Knight III, 1992, p. 322). This would be parallel to “blessed hope” which is Hellenistic (Quinn, 1988, p. 154). In the case of verse 13, I concur with Towner’s understanding that “glory” is probably not to be taken as an adjective but rather as that which will appear (P. Towner, 1994, p. 234).

In support for my translation, it should be pointed out that δόξης is used elsewhere not as an adjective but as a noun in relation to the second coming of Jesus to describe the glory that will be accompanying his return (Mark 8:38; Mathew 16:27; Luke 9:26 etc). Ngewa comments that in his first appearance, when he revealed grace (verse 11), he seemed weak: an infant and a suffering man but his in his second appearance to reveals glory, we will see all the power and majesty (Ngewa, 2009, p. 386). To conclude, I would like to quote Fee: “The second coming of Jesus will the final manifestation of God’s full glory (Fee, n.d., p. 196).

τοῦ μεγάλου θεοῦ καὶ σωτῆρος ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ
of our great God and saviour Jesus Christ.

This part of the verse demonstrates the greatly contested Granville sharp rule. For clarity’s sake the Granville Sharp rule is said to be applicable if the construction article-substantive-kai-substantive (TSKS) involves personal nouns which are singular and not proper names, they always refer to the same person.(Wallace, 1997, p. 271) One other example

of this is 2 Peter 1:1 “.... those who through the righteousness of our God and Savior Jesus Christ.....”(Bible Gateway Passage, n.d.)

There are three major ways in which this verse is debated. First the discussion considers the verse to be talking about two persons (Jesus and God). Secondly ‘the glory of God’ treated as Jesus Christ. Thirdly, Jesus referred to as the ‘great God and saviour.’ The first two deny the deity of Christ in this verse and the last one supports his deity.

I. Jesus and God

RSV translates τοῦ μεγάλου θεοῦ καὶ σωτῆρος ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ as “of the great God and Saviour Jesus Christ.”

On this construction, God and saviour are considered to be separate object genitives with “manifestation” and “Jesus Christ” as appositional to “Savior.”(Padilla et al., 2022, p. 315) In support of this, Dibelius and Conzelmann urges that “the fact that the title “saviour” is applied to Christ doesn’t prove that the designation “God” is also given to him.”(Conzelmann, 1989, p. 137) He also considers the subordination of Christ to God as something seen in the text (Conzelmann, 1989, p. 143). On this matter, there is a parallel in the NT in 2 Peter 1:1 “... the righteous of our God and Savior Jesus.” The other weak argument on this is offered by Christopher where he argues that there striking similarity between Titus 2:11 and 1 Timothy 2:1-7 and that in both cases Jesus is a “human being” not God.(Edwards, 2011, p. 147) This seems to be a forced parallel and the argument only stands if one presupposes the influence of Isaiah 42:6-7 and Isaiah 49:6-8 on both verses which is debatable.

Winer suggests that it would be unprecedented in the NT to use Θεός as an attribute to Jesus. He does so by saying “the doctrinal conviction, deduced from Paul’s teaching, is that this great apostle could not have called *Christ the great God*.(Knight III, 1992, p. 323) This is not necessarily true since, as mentioned earlier, 2 Peter 1:1 refers to Christ as God. There are many examples where Jesus is God in the early church writings like Ignatius to the Smyrnaeans “I give glory to Jesus Christ the God” Ignatius to the Smyrnaeans 1:1” (*St. Ignatius of Antioch to the Smyrnaeans (Lightfoot Translation)*, n.d.) Justin also does the same in the *First Apology* chapter 6.(Cyril C. Richardson: *Early Christian Fathers - Christian Classics Ethereal Library*, n.d.).

II. Jesus as the Glory of God

For Gordon Fee, this understanding is achieved by considering Jesus Christ to be in apposition to “the glory of God” or to use his words, “what will be finally manifested is God’s glory, namely Jesus Christ.”(Fee, n.d., p. 196) He presents Colossian 2:2 as grammatical support for this. The problem in using this passage is that the apposition is quite clear while it is ambiguous in verse 13 (Marshall, 1999, p. 279). For that reason, this verse should not be considered because it’s not as a parallel in support for this construction.

Another argument in support for seeing Christ as the “glory of God” was proposed by Hort who sees “glory of God” as a primitive Christological title also found in (James 2:1; 2 Corinthians 4:6; Act 7: 55: 56; Hebrews 1:3) [Knight, 1999, p. 324]. The same scriptures are stated and used in support of this argument by Harris. On Act 7:55, he claims that “But nowhere in Acts is this distinction between Jesus and God more pronounced than in Act 7:55-56 where at his martyrdom Stephen sees the glory of God and Jesus standing at God's right hand” (Harris, 2008, p. 44). There is one thing these texts have in common: the term denoting glory is not used as a title which is the case in Titus 2:13 (Marshall, 1999, p. 279).

Specifically on Titus 2:13, Moule denotes that it is highly improbable to take saviour as in apposition with the glory and “kai” which would produce a translation that has Jesus as the glory. If it was probable this is the translation he offers “the glory of our great God, namely our saviour Jesus Christ (Moule, 2017, p. 109).

With the above reasons, the second option of seeing Jesus as the glory of God is not only highly improbable but one which has failed to win the day according to Quinn (Quinn, 1990, p. 156).

III. Jesus as God

With this third option, I would like to give grammatical, and historical reason from other Greek texts as to why I think the Granville Sharp rule stands. Θεός is not a proper name since it would disqualify the application of the Granville Sharp rule in other places where like in Ephesians 1:3, John 20:7, Luke 20:37. Wallace supports the same argument by pointing to two things. Firstly, θεός occurs in the plural frequently in the NT, while no other personal proper name does and secondly, proper names are usually anarthrous (since they need no article to be definite), except in cases of anaphora, contrast, or other similar situations (Wallace, 2008, p. 252).

Having established that Θεός passes the test of not being a proper name, it is clear that this construction contains two nouns θεοῦ and σωτήρος connected by “καί” as the conjunction, and as seen in the word “τοῦ”. In this sentence “τοῦ”. applied to the first noun and for that reason, Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ is an exegetical genitive making Jesus Christ as the one being identified as God and saviour.

Besides, the complex grammatical arguments, all allusions to the epiphany in the pastoral letters (1 Timothy 6:14; Titus 2:13; 2 Timothy 1:10; 2 Timothy 4:1, 8) refer to Jesus Christ. In his conclusion on the epiphany, Houwelingen concludes that “To be more precise, it is God who appears in Christ in order to save people ” (Houwelingen & Rob, 2019, pp.89-108).

Quinn argues that in a secular and Jewish Greek “theos kai soter” is a formulaic bound phrase that applies to one divine person and that it was never parcelled out between two. (Quinn, 1990, p.159) In support of this historical view Lea and Griffin states that “it was the majority view of the Church fathers... for the intimate association to his (Jesus Christ’s) glory with that of God would be blasphemous for a monotheist like Paul if he did not accept Christ’s deity ”(Lea & Griffin, 1992, p. 441).

In conclusion, it is no surprise that grammatical and historical evidences point to the depiction of Jesus as the great God and saviour whose glory is going to be manifested on the day of the Parousia. This was to be the blessed hope for Paul, Titus, the Cretans.

14 ὃς ἔδωκεν ἑαυτὸν ὑπὲρ ἡμῶν ἵνα λυτρώσῃται ἡμᾶς ἀπὸ πάσης ἀνομίας καὶ καθάρῃ ἑαυτὸν λαὸν περιούσιον, ζηλωτὴν καλῶν ἔργων.

14. who gave himself for us so that he might redeem us from all lawlessness and cleanse for himself a chosen people, zealous for good works.

As if Paul thinks that the readers didn’t fully understand this great God and saviour called Jesus Christ, he further explains ὃς (who) this God is. This is done by explaining the purpose and ministry expressed in the first appearance of Jesus Christ.

The phrase ἔδωκεν ἑαυτὸν describe what Jesus did in his first appearance. He ‘ἔδωκεν’ (gave) ἑαυτὸν (himself). The action is expressed by the author as a consummative

past tense. It shows that this action was realized once and for all. The reflexive pronoun ἐαυτὸν (himself) following the verb is referring to Christ as the one who did the action. It is indeed true that “Christ gave himself.”

Christ did the action of giving himself (ὕπὲρ ἡμῶν). The ἡμῶν (us) here is to be considered as a genitive describing who is the recipient of the action of Christ giving himself. It is “for/ on behalf” of “us” that Christ gave himself.

This part of the verse seems to carry an idea explored by Paul in 1 Timothy 2:6 where he explains Christ to be our ransom. The other way to put would be to say, Christ wasn’t killed. He offered himself to be killed for us and the big question is why.

Using the purpose clause ἵνα translated as ‘that’, Paul expresses the purpose of Christ’s action to be λυτρώσθαι. The root verb from which this is derived is λυτρόω (redeem), which literally means ‘to release on receipt of a ransom (Guthrie, 1990, p. 237). In this case it is ἡμᾶς (us) being released and Christ is our ransom.

Having described who is the ransom and who is to be redeemed, Paul follows with explaining “what” people are going to be redeemed from. It is ἀπὸ (from) ‘πάσης ἀνομίας’. This construction with a genitive whose preposition is ἀπὸ shows that the personal interest of the redeemer is to take people away from the sphere of ἀνομίας (lawlessness).

The word ἀνομίας can refer both to a frame of mind in opposition to righteousness or to lawlessness (the action) or lawless deeds (Bauer, 2000, p. 71). The first definition blends well with the context of this the chapter and the following allusion to ζηλωτὴν καλῶν ἔργων (zealous for good works).

Some scholars like Mounce find this statement to share in language with Ezekiel 37:23b:

But I will save them from all the backslidings in which they have sinned and will cleanse them; and they shall be my people, and I will be their God (Mounce, 2000, p. 1233).

καθαρίσῃ ἐαυτῷ λαὸν περιούσιον, ζηλωτὴν καλῶν ἔργων.

As if redemption is not enough, Paul continues to show us that when Christ gave himself, he did so, in order that he might purify (καθαρίσῃ). Although this is a popular word in the NT, it is only applied here in the Pastoral letters and in this case, it is referring to the purification which happens because Christ gave himself. In other words, it is a right religious status being established or restored (Yarbrough, 2018, p. 532).

The people in this verse for whom Christ gave himself are in this phrase λαὸν περιούσιον. The translation of this phrase varies. For example, it is translated as ‘peculiar people’ in YTL, ‘people who are truly his’ in NET, and ‘people that his very own’ in NIV and RSV. The difference in translation is dependent on how one translates περιούσιον and the theology behind it. Chosen and special are the options offered in BAGD (Bauer, 2000, p. 654). In my translation I offer “chosen people” since it brings out the message, it resounds the ‘chosen language in Titus 1:1, and it also brings about a smooth translation. This idea of a chosen people is common in the Old Testament. Like Israelites, once we have been redeemed and purified, we are adopted into God’s family thus becoming his very own (Ngewa, 2009, 387).

In the OT, the purpose of the election of Israel was to be a kingdom of priests and a holy nation (Exodus 19:6), just as Cyrus was chosen to rebuild the Jerusalem and the Temple (Isaiah 45:1; 44:28). The purpose of our choice is expressed in the next part of this verse.

ζηλωτὴν καλῶν ἔργων

The relationship between the two nouns in a genitive construction καλῶν ἔργων translated as “for good works” is that in this case “good works” are the object for the accusative ζηλωτὴν which is why I render it as “zealous for good works.”

In summarizing this verse Lea and Griffin puts it well in saying that “for those who have been redeemed from the doom of sin and death and brought into a unique relationship with God, the true voluntary response is to be enthusiastic “to do good works (Thomas, Lea & Griffin Jr,1992), 441.

Application

One may ask to whom and how this study is applicable. Although the Cretans and a typical Christian of the first century live in different worlds. The will of God for them to live a godly life stretches across time and culture. For that very reason the call to live as those purchase by Christ in his first coming, those trained by the grace in the present is applicable to all Christians everywhere. In views of God’s unchanging promise of his return, all believers should seek to conducting themselves in a way consistent to God’s redemptive work. They should be zealous for the good work and be ready to proclaim Christ no only as lord but also as God. There are many cults and religions that deny the deity of Christ calling him to be a prophet, a god like many others or like an angel. The truth of the matter is that paul clearly teaches that Jesus Christ is a God and also Savior.

Conclusion

This study has revealed that the grace which appeared in the past was Jesus Christ who came to make salvation accessible to all people through faith. His redemptive work is still going on as the grace of God teaches us to deny certain way of live and to live a life that is consistent with sound doctrine. As we live we should live eschatologically and looking forward to the return of our lord Jesus Christ whose deity is well affirmed by the Granville sharp rule. Although there is a heavy ethical demand both in Titus 2:1-10 and other passages in the scripture, our joy should be to know that we are empowered by Christ to fulfill all that God expected us to do and one way he does that is through teaching us

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