HANDOUT · CHAPTER FOUR

Grace Has Appeared

Titus 2:11–14 · The manger is not where grace begins.

> *For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation for all people, instructing us to deny godlessness and worldly lusts and to live in a sensible, righteous, and godly way in the present age, while we wait for the blessed hope, the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ. He gave himself for us to redeem us from all lawlessness and to cleanse for himself a people for his own possession, eager to do good works.*
>
> Christian Standard Bible

THE VERB CHANGES

1. When the Son came to be of a woman, something new happened to him. When grace appeared, nothing new happened to grace. Something that appears was there all along and is now in _____.
2. Before Paul used it, the word already meant a god stepping into view, an emperor arriving at the gates. The great arrival of God in the world came in the shape of a _____.

WHO DOES SOMETHING HERE?

3. Go back and look at verse 11. The only thing in the whole sentence that acts is _____, and the only thing grace does is show up.
4. Bethlehem had no room, and grace appeared anyway. If grace had waited for us to be _____, we would still be waiting.
5. A page later, "the kindness of God our Savior and his love for mankind appeared" (3:4). That love is a ruler's clemency, and nobody earns a pardon; if you earned it, it wouldn't be a pardon, it would be a _____.

WHERE WAS IT BEFORE?

6. 2 Timothy 1:9–10 holds two moments apart. The grace was *given* before time began. The grace was *made* _____ now.
7. Nothing in God changed. God didn't become gracious at Bethlehem or at Golgotha. He became _____.

YOU WILL HEAR IT SAID God helps those who help themselves.

AND THE ANSWER IS That line isn't in the Bible, though plenty of people would bet it is. Read verse 11 and look for the human being who does something first. The sentence has one subject, and it isn't us.

THE WORDS BEHIND "EPIPHANY"

ἐπεφάνη *epephanē* · eh-pef-AH-nay · it appeared; it came into view *The sun doesn't come to be at dawn. It comes into view.*

φιλανθρωπία *philanthrōpia* · fil-an-throw-PEE-ah · love for mankind; a ruler's kindness to people who have no claim on him *Not a check written to a cause. A king stooping to people in his power.*

παιδεύουσα *paideuousa* · pie-DYOO-oo-sah · training, the way you raise a child: teaching, correcting, disciplining *A father teaching his sixteen-year-old to drive, willing to be unpopular for the boy's sake.*

ἐπιφάνεια *epiphaneia* · eh-pif-AN-ay-ah · an appearing; an arrival into view *The same family as epephanē. In Titus 2 the verb looks back to Bethlehem, and the noun, in verse 13, looks ahead.*

λυτρόω *lytroō* · loo-TRO-oh · to ransom; to set free by paying the price *The family that empties its savings to bring a son home from the men who are holding him.*

FOR ALL PEOPLE, AND A GRACE THAT TRAINS

8. Verse 11 begins with *for*, and it reaches back over the whole household list, down to the slaves. The grace that appeared didn't stop at the level of the household where respectable people live. It went all the way to the _____.
9. Verse 12 still has grace as its subject: grace appeared, *instructing us*. Grace isn't the thing that excuses you from the training. Grace is the _____.

TWO APPEARINGS, AND THE ONE WHO GAVE HIMSELF

10. One appearing is behind us, and one is ahead. Advent is not a pageant. We are not acting out waiting. We are _____.
11. One *the* stands over *great God* and *Savior*, like "my brother and friend Tom." So Paul, in the middle of a clause about what to expect while you wait, calls Jesus Christ *our great* _____.
12. *He gave himself … to redeem us … and to cleanse for himself a people*. The ransom happens once. The _____ takes the rest of your life.

WHAT THE CHURCH HAS ALWAYS SAID

> *I have not first risen up to You, but to awake me You have come: for His mercy shall come before me.*
>
> Augustine, *Exposition on Psalm 59*

> *He speaks here of two appearings; for there are two; the first of grace, the second of retribution and justice.*
>
> John Chrysostom, *Homily 5 on Titus*

TO THINK ABOUT

1. In verse 11, who does something? Name the subject, then every human being in the sentence. What are they doing?
2. Second Timothy says the grace was "given to us in Christ Jesus before time began" and "has now been made evident." Where was it in between?
3. Think of one thing you've been doing to get ready for Christmas. In verse 11, whose move came first, and what happens if we forget?

THE SENTENCE TO TAKE HOME

The manger is not where grace begins. The manger is where grace becomes visible.

Three times he came to be: of a woman, in the likeness of human beings, of the seed of David. Then grace appeared. Go back through all four passages, look at every sentence about his coming, and find one place where a human being does anything but receive.

THE ONE THING I WOULD SAY TO SOMEBODY WHO ASKED

ON CHRISTMAS EVE When the candle comes down the row to you, take it the way you'd take a baby somebody hands you at a party. You didn't prepare for it. You don't have to bring anything. You only have to hold out your arms.