



FIRST BAPTIST
CHURCH
FAIR OAKS RANCH

Day 19: The Blessed Hope

Titus 2:11–13 *For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation for all people, training us to renounce ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright, and godly lives in the present age, waiting for our blessed hope, the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ. (ESV)*

DEVOTIONAL

This may be the single most important passage in our entire segment, because it draws a straight line between expectancy and holiness; the very purpose our forty days is meant to focus on. Paul says God's grace does two things at once: it saves us, and then it trains us. And the goal of that training is a life of self-control and godliness lived "in the present age", while we are "waiting for our blessed hope, the appearing of... Jesus Christ."

Look carefully at how the passage works. Grace teaches us to "renounce ungodliness and worldly passions" — that's purity. It accomplishes this through fixing our eyes on a coming event: the appearing of our great God and Savior; specifically at the rapture. In other words, the expectation of Christ's return is not idle daydreaming; it is one of God's chosen tools of sanctification. The word translated "training" is *paideuo*, the word for raising and disciplining a child, shaping character over time. Grace acts like a loving parent continually directing us toward holiness, and the classroom is this present age, lived in constant thought and anticipation of His return.

R.C. Sproul spent his life insisting that a right vision of God changes everything about how we live — that we cannot gaze upon the holiness and glory of God and remain unchanged. This passage says something similar about the future vision: when we live with our eyes fixed on the glorious appearing of Christ, that hope reaches back into the present and reshapes our behavior now. It creates an urgency within us to live rightly. What we're expecting determines how we're living.

Think of how this works in ordinary life. A soldier keeps his post differently when he knows the commander's inspection is coming. A bride prepares herself as the wedding day approaches. The nearer and more real the coming event, the more it governs the present moment. Paul calls Christ's return our "blessed hope" — not as a threat to create fear of judgment - but as a joyful anticipation of our current condition of fallenness to finally be over. A heart genuinely anticipating that joyful day finds worldly passions loosening their grip almost on their own. Why cling to the fading pleasures of a world that is passing away, when the King Himself is about to appear?

TAKE AWAY

What you're expecting shapes how you're living. Fix your eyes on the blessed hope of Christ's appearing, and worldly passions start to lose their grip on their own.

PRAYER PROMPT

Ask the Lord to let the hope of His appearing train your heart toward holiness in the very ordinary choices of today.