

Godly Living in an Ungodly World

Conclusion

The Cretans were in one sense normal Roman citizens of their day. In another sense, they had one of the worst reputations of any people in the empire. Onto their island and into their culture came the grace of God. As people were saved they needed specific instruction on how to live a godly life on an ungodly island. Paul instructs them clearly in how to do that. We may find ourselves on ungodly islands as well...our neighborhoods, our work places, our schools, our places of recreation and leisure. How do we live and why do we live in a godly way? I hope these verses have given us the needed direction to live godly in an ungodly world.

Specific Action to Take This Week

Think about the specific areas of ungodliness that you encounter in your daily life. How should you best respond to those situations?

Introduction

Since Adam and Eve sinned in the Garden of Eden, God's people have often lived their lives in cultures dominated by ungodliness. Many Old Testament saints lived in godless societies that were diametrically opposed to their religious values. It was true in the time of the New Testament when Christians lived in the Roman culture and it is true of believers today who find themselves in many different cultures with varying degrees of animosity toward Christianity.

The Bible in its entirety helps us know how to navigate as God's people in an ungodly world. There are some texts that address the issue directly, such as Titus 2:11-14.

For the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men, teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in the present age, looking for the blessed hope and glorious appearing of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ, 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. Titus 2:11-14

Into the island of Crete came the gospel and later this letter from the pen of the Apostle Paul. It is an island about 160 miles long and varies in width from 7.5 to 38 miles, about sixty miles from Greece. Cretans were in the mainstream of Roman culture and godlessness. The Cretans were known as liars. They had a reputation for fraudulence, avarice, and fierceness. They were skilled archers who were hired by Greek armies to assist them in warfare. To "Cretize" was to engage in deception. Paul quotes an ancient Greek poet, Epimenides (600 B.C.) in Titus 1:12, "***Cretans are always liars, evil beasts, lazy gluttons.***"

This section from 2:11-15 is surrounded by exhortations concerning the life of the Christian in society (2:1-10 and 3:1-2).

For at the beginning of 2:11 begins an explanation about why the Christian's life is to be different from the unsaved. It is because of the grace of God in the believer's life. These verses give us direction about how to live godly in a pagan world and they shape our faith about several key areas of truth.

- About grace
- About redemption
- About substitutionary atonement
- About the return of Christ
- About the deity of Christ
- About good works
- About the uniqueness of the body of Christ

Paul gives us three reasons for living godly in this world.

I. The Grace of God (2:11-12)

Key concept: *The grace of God teaches us to deny ungodliness and live godly.*

A. The Appearance of God's Grace (11)

1. It was in the coming of Jesus Christ
2. It brought salvation
3. It made provision for all men

B. The Instruction of God's Grace (12)

1. Deny ungodliness
2. Deny worldly lusts
See 1 John 2:15-16
3. Live soberly
See Titus 1:8; 2:2, 5, 6.
4. Live righteously
5. Live godly
See Titus 1:2.

II. The Hope of the Believer (2:13)

Key concept: *Looking for the return of Christ keeps us focused on the godly values of life.*

See 1 Corinthians 15:58; Philippians 3:17-21.

A. The Nature of Our Hope

It is *blessed*. How is the promise of Christ's return a blessing to us?

Hope for the believer is more in the realm of "confidence" than "wishing" because our faith is in God.

B. The Realization of Our Hope

On *appearing* see 1 Timothy 6:14;

2 Timothy 1:10; 4:1,8; 2 Thessalonians 2:8.

The noun of this word is used in verse 11 for the first coming of Christ. Here the verb is used of the second coming of Christ.

C. The Person of Our Hope

This is a strong affirmation of the deity of Jesus Christ. We could translate this phrase, "*The great God who is our savior Jesus Christ.*"

III. The Sacrifice of Christ (2:14)

Key Concept: *Christ redeemed us to be a unique people, displaying purity and good works.*

A. It was Substitutionary

Who gave Himself for us

B. It was Redemptive

That He might redeem us from every lawless deed

C. It was Purifying

And purify for Himself His own special people

D. It is Motivating

Zealous of good works.