

THE MANIFESTATION OF THE GRACE OF SALVATION

Golden Text

“For the grace of God has appeared that offers salvation to all people.”
(Titus 2:11)

Useful Practice

The grace of God emanated from his loving heart to save the lost man, through the vicarious sacrifice of Christ Jesus.

Scripture Reading

Titus 2:11-14; 3:4-6

Titus 2:11 - For the grace of God has appeared that offers salvation to all people.

12 - It teaches us to say “No” to ungodliness¹ and worldly² passions, and to live self-controlled, upright³ and godly lives in this present age,

13 - while we wait for the blessed hope—the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ,

14 - Who gave himself for us to redeem us from all wickedness⁴ and to purify for himself a people that are his very own, eager⁵ to do what is good.

Titus 3:4 - But when the kindness⁶ and love of God our Savior appeared,

5 - he saved us, not because of righteous things we had done, but because of his mercy. He saved us through the washing of rebirth and renewal by

¹ Impiedade

² Material; mundano; deste mundo

³ Vertical; de pé; direito

⁴ Maldade, perversidade

⁵ Ardente; impaciente; ansioso

⁶ Bondade; gentileza; amabilidade

the Holy Spirit,

6 - whom he poured out on us generously through Jesus Christ our Savior,

General Objective

To teach that God's grace is the most extraordinary and wonderful manifestation of his love for humanity through Jesus Christ, his Son.

Specific Objectives

- I. **To explain** the various manifestations of God's grace.
- II. **To clarify** the believer's relationship toward the authorities and others.
- III. **To propose** an experience of good works and the treatment toward⁷ "heretics"

Introduction

In this last lesson of the trimester, we will learn about divine grace. The grace of God is the most extraordinary manifestation of his love for humanity. But the latter can only enjoy the benefits of this divine action, if it recognizes its miserable spiritual state and converts by accepting Christ as Savior.

I. THE EXPRESSION OF GOD'S GRACE

1. Common grace. "Grace" comes from the Hebrew word *hessed* - חֶסֶד and from the Greek term *charis* - χάρις, whose most common meaning is that of "unmerited favor that God grants man for His love, kindness and mercy". From this concept, we can see "common grace", through which God gives men the seasons of the year, the day, the night, life itself, that is, all things "(Acts 17:25 b).

2. Saving grace. "For the grace of God has appeared that offers salvation to all people" (2:11). It is available to "all people" but it is only achieved by those who believe in God and accept Christ Jesus as their only and sufficient Savior. Through it, God saves, justifies and adopts sinners as his children (John 1:12).

3. Justifying and regenerating grace. The grace of God is the source of the justification of man (Rom 3:21-26). Once a person is born again, he becomes a "new creation" (2 Corinthians 5:17), being made part of the family of God: "Consequently, you are no longer foreigners and strangers, but fel-

⁷ Em direção a; relativamente a

low⁸ citizens with God's people and also members of his household⁹" (Eph 2:19).

4. Sanctifying grace. The grace of God can only be effective in the life of the converted person, if he is willing to deny himself to have a life of holiness. The lack¹⁰ of sanctification nullifies the effects of regeneration and justification. The Bible says, "Make every effort to live in peace with everyone and to be holy; without holiness no one will see the Lord" (Hebrews 12:14).

II. THE CONDUCT OF A SAVED PERSON IN JESUS

1. Subjection to the authorities (v. 1). A sincere Christian must obey the rulers¹¹ and the constituted authorities, unless they violate the law of God. Jesus commanded to "give back to Caesar what is Caesar's" and "to God what is God's" (Matthew 22:21).

2. A Christian person's relationship (v. 2). Here we see four ethical behaviors required of Christians. Let's see:

a) **To slander¹² no one.** Slandering someone is a very serious sin, whether it occurs in the church, or outside of it. It is subject to legal sanctions or condemnation under human justice. Much more in God's Law. Slander is often uttered with the intention to harm¹³ another person. Christians must cultivate the Spirit's fruit of "kindness", which is the quality of those who only do good (Gal 5:22).

b) **To be peaceable.** Quarrels¹⁴ in the churches usually bring about very damaging results. Unfortunately, in some meetings, even with Christian ministers, we see people quarreling with one other, because of political or personal interests. This does not please God (2 Tim 2:24).

c) **To be modest.** Modesty must be evident in the lives of Christian men and women. It reveals the simplicity urged by Jesus in his gospel: "I am sending you out like sheep among wolves. Therefore be as shrewd as snakes and as innocent as doves" (Matthew 10:16).

⁸ Companheiros , camaradas

⁹ Doméstico; da casa; da família

¹⁰ Falta, ausência

¹¹ Governantes

¹² Calúnia; difamação

¹³ Danificar, prejudicar

¹⁴ Querelas, brigas

d) **To be "kind to everyone"**. Being "gentle and humble in heart" must be a hallmark of the servant of God", as Jesus taught (Matthew 11:29). Besides quarrel not being interesting among Christians, the believer must be "kind to everyone, able to teach, not resentful" (2 Timothy 2:24b).

3. The washing through the renewal by the Holy Spirit (v. 3). We were slave to sin and far away from God, but Christ saved us and purified us. As new creations we no longer take pleasure in sin. See some following characteristics, according to Paul, which distinguish a man who lives according to the flesh:

a) **Folly**¹⁵. It refers to the old life, full of madness, recklessness¹⁶, thoughtlessness and inconsistency, which leads many to eternal perdition. In the parable of the Ten Virgins, Jesus draws attention to the five "foolish" or unwise ones, who did not take oil to wait for the bridegroom (Matthew 25:1-13). Jesus also spoke about the "foolish" man who built his house on sand (Mt 7:26). A spiritual disaster becomes inevitable.

b) **Disobedience**. Disobedience was the first sin committed by man (Romans 5:19). And since then it has been the "mother" of all sins committed, at all times (Rom 11:30), by those who are "children of disobedience" (Eph 2:2; 5:6; Col 3:6).

c) **Going astray**. Without God, without salvation in Christ, man is lost, like sheep without a shepherd (Matthew 9:36). It is a difficult and, sometimes, desperate situation. But whoever does as the "prodigal son", who made the wise decision to return humbly to his father's house, where he was received with love and mercy, is happy (Luke 15:18-24).

d) **Serving "various lusts and pleasures"**. Another translation reads "passions and pleasures" that dominate the life of a man without God. The delights of the flesh hinder a man from truly converting to God, choked by life's "thorns" (Luke 8:14). The lusts of life, or the exacerbated desires of the flesh are impediment to a life of holiness and faithfulness to Jesus (1 Peter 4:3; Jude 16).

e) **"Living in malice and envy"**. Malice is synonymous with evil, wickedness, malignity, which should not be part of Christian life (Ephesians 4:31; Col 3:8); envy is another feeling that is unworthy for a sincere Christian. Envy "rots the bones" (Proverbs 14:30).

¹⁵ Loucura; insensatez

¹⁶ Imprudência

f) Hateful people, hating "one other". The "washing of the rebirth by the Holy Spirit" makes us "justified by his grace" and heirs of eternal life (3:4-7). John warns us by saying that "Anyone who hates a brother or sister is a murderer, and you know that no murderer has eternal life residing in him" (1 Jn 3:15). In the Old Testament, only someone who killed a person with some kind of dangerous object was a murderer. In the gospel of the grace of God, a murderer is someone who hates his brother in his heart.

III. GOOD WORKS AND HOW TO TREAT HERETICS

1. Practicing good works (v. 8). Doing good works is part of the everyday life of a male or a female servant of God. "For we are God's handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do" (Ephesians 2:10). Whoever is in Christ takes pleasure in doing what is good and acceptable to his neighbor and to God.

2. How to deal with heretics (v. 10). Paul teaches that we should avoid false teachers, not getting involved in their foolish discussions. We often end up discussing and giving too much attention to the teachings that are contrary to God's Word.

CONCLUSION

The grace of God is the source of man's salvation. It is a favor that is never deserved by anyone, and it shows his love and mercy for sinners. This grace is manifested "to all people", but it is only effective in the lives of those who accept Christ as their personal Savior.