

## “Living with Anticipation”

### Texts

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**Titus 2:11 - 15** <sup>11</sup> For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation for all people, <sup>12</sup> training us to renounce ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright, and godly lives in the present age, <sup>13</sup> waiting for our blessed hope, the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ, <sup>14</sup> who gave himself for us to redeem us from all lawlessness and to purify for himself a people for his own possession who are zealous for good works. <sup>15</sup> Declare these things; exhort and rebuke with all authority. Let no one disregard you.

**Revelation 22:20** He who testifies to these things says, "Surely I am coming soon." Amen. Come, Lord Jesus!

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### Summary

People—believers and nonbelievers alike—have a conception of heaven that is more Platonic than Biblical. That is, they believe that their souls leave their bodies and float into heaven after death. The Bible, however, teaches that Jesus’ resurrection foreshadows what will happen to those who trust in Him for salvation—they too will share in *bodily* resurrection in a redeemed creation (see Rev 21,1-5a). In today’s message we reflected on (1) the object of Christian hope; (2) its impact on present living; (3) and several applications for maintain a robust and Biblical view of the future.

Titus 2:11-15 contains a literature structure with a pivot that aptly expresses the proper Christian posture of anticipation:

A (2:11-12)

B (2:13)

A' (2:14)

In short, the true believer, on the one hand, looks back at the cross with *gratitude* knowing that Christ Jesus lived the life that we should have lived and died the death that we should have died. On the other hand, he also looks forward with *anticipation*—with a profound sense of desire and excitement—for Christ’s second return when He will make all things new. Revelation 21:4 describes the redemption in view: “He will wipe away every tear from their eyes, and death shall be no more, neither shall there be mourning nor crying nor pain anymore, for the former things have passed away.”

What difference does this Christian hope (of the future) have on how we live here and now? Being people with hope in a Kingdom that is characterized by justice, righteousness and good works demands that we live as representatives of that Kingdom here and now, pursuing justice, righteousness and good works. Hence, the apostle Paul notes that Jesus “gave Himself for us [not only] to redeem us from all lawlessness [but also] to purify for Himself a people ... **who are zealous for good works**” (Titus 2:14). In other words, a Biblical perspective on our future has significant consequences on how we live in the present.

The entire letter to Titus suggests several applications for maintaining a robust view of the future: (1) Regular participation in good works, which provides the fertile ground from which longing for redemption grows; (2) appointment of spiritual leaders who are Kingdom-centered and gospel-driven; (3) constant meditation on Christian hope, a discipline that is becoming increasingly absent among busy believers.

### **Discussion Questions**

1. Revelation 21:4 reads: “He will wipe away every tear from their eyes, and death shall be no more, neither shall there be mourning nor crying nor pain anymore, for the former things have passed away.” How does this hope bring much personal encouragement to you? Share one personal struggle/tragedy that has deepened your hope for Christ’s second return.
2. Describe a person whose life reflects a longing for “our blessed hope.” What makes his/her life so distinct?
3. Titus 2:11 reminds us that we are “to live self-controlled, upright, and godly lives in the present age” as we wait for our blessed hope. Is your present life consistent with this hope? Is it characterized by a pursuit of righteousness and good works?
4. Participation in good works reminds us that things are not the way they’re supposed to be. This is why it’s so important for us to remain deeply committed to good works. Share an instance when participating in good works (i.e., mercy ministry) triggered longing for Christ’s second return.
5. As a community group take several minutes to reflect on Revelation 21:1-5a together. Then pray together in light of Christian hope. Pray especially for the elders of our church, asking God that they would continually remind us of our hope because of Jesus Christ.