



# Are You Listening To Your Teacher?

by Pastor F. M. Riley



***“For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world; Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Savior Jesus Christ; Who gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto Himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works. These things speak, and exhort, and rebuke with all authority. Let no man despise thee.” (Titus 2:11-15)***

## Introduction

I am sometimes asked [*mostly by critics*] why I place so much emphasis on the return of the Lord. The above text provides my Scriptural answer. I believe God's people are supposed to listen to their teacher. In this study I want to examine this text and related Scriptures for the benefit of our readers. Not only should this study give Scriptural answers to my critics, but hopefully it will encourage all true believers to greater dedication in watching, witnessing, and praying while we wait for the coming of our Lord, **Mark 13:34-37; 14:38; Luke 19:13.**

## The Teacher

First, let's identify and get acquainted with our Teacher. His name, in this context, is GRACE. Numerous Scriptures tell us that He came from God Himself, **Titus 2:11; John 3:13.** In **John 1:17** the Scripture explicitly states, ***“For the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ.”***

The English word ***“grace”*** in these passages is translated from the Greek word, ***“charis.”*** This Greek word literally means, ***“goodwill; loving kindness; favor; act of favoring; kindness bestowed by a master upon his inferior subjects; especially of God towards fallen man; the kindness which is bestowed upon one which is neither deserved nor merited.”*** See Thayer's Greek Lexicon, pages 665-666. Strong's No. 5485.

Folks, this is exactly what the Lord Jesus Christ did for fallen mankind. He left His glory above to come into this sin cursed world to bestow upon fallen humanity ***“the grace of God”*** that fallen men neither deserve, nor can ever merit. The inspired Word tells us that Christ did this for us because ***“.....God so loved the world, that He gave His***

***only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life," John 3:16.***

It is obvious to every person willing to deal honestly with the Word of God, that ***"the grace of God,"*** personified in the Lord Jesus Christ Himself, has indeed ***"appeared to all men."*** Just mention the very name, *"Jesus"* or *"Jesus Christ,"* to mature adults in any nation on earth today, and they know exactly who you are talking about. They may love Him, or they may hate and curse Him, but they all know who you are talking about when you mention His name. They all know that He claimed to be the Son of God and the Savior of mankind. Truly, ***"the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men."*** Glory!

It is then the Lord Jesus Christ Himself who is the GRACE of God personified, and is therefore the Teacher set forth in our Scripture text. For further verification of this truth see ***Hebrews 1:1-2.***

## **The Students**

Now let's identify who it is that GRACE is teaching. Even though the ***"grace of God....hath appeared to all men,"*** it is not all men who are being taught. The Word of God is quite clear in stating that ***".....the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto Him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned," 1 Corinthians 2:14.*** Therefore it is not those who reject Christ and the gospel who are being taught by GRACE in this text. Then who is it? I'm glad you asked!

The inspired writer states in this text that those whom GRACE is teaching are ***"us,"*** plainly including himself as one of the students being taught. While it is true that the ***"the grace of God....hath appeared to all men,"*** GRACE only teaches those who respond to Him by ***".....repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ," Acts 20:21.*** See also ***Ephesians 2:8-10.*** The students then being taught are Bible believing, born again, children of God. No Christ rejector is qualified to receive the things of God. Only those indwelt by the Holy Spirit of God can understand spiritual truth. See ***John 14:16-17, 16:13-14,*** and ***1 Corinthians 2:9-16.***

Therefore, every reader claiming to be a "Christian" comes under the authority of this text. YOU are one of the students whom GRACE is teaching. The question then just naturally arises, ***"Are you listening to your teacher?"*** Well...??

## **What is Being Taught?**

In this text there are seven subjects specifically named, which are being taught to God's people [*true believers*] by GRACE every day of our lives.

Before I deal with the seven subjects listed, I want to emphasize to our readers that whether you like these subjects or not is totally immaterial. It is the Teacher who chooses the subjects to be taught; not the student. Therefore your like or dislike of the subjects carries no weight whatsoever. GRACE keeps right on teaching these subjects, even though some who claim to be "Christians" may not like to hear or refuse to hear the subjects being taught. Some today stop their ears like the Pharisees and Sadducees of old, ***Acts 7:54-58***. Some turn away in unbelief. Some become stubborn and self-willed, refusing to hear what is being taught. But such actions will only bring heartache and trouble to the rebellious student. They will neither discourage nor stop our Teacher from carrying out the Commission given to Him. He will go right on teaching these subjects daily for the benefit of all those of His people who have ***"seeing eyes and hearing ears," Matthew 13:15-16***, whether the students like it or not. Now what is it that GRACE is teaching?

The first two subjects are ***"ungodliness"*** and ***"worldly lusts."*** Folks, GRACE is teaching God's people every day of our lives that we are not to be involved in an ungodly lifestyle in any form. Significantly, ***"ungodliness"*** and ***"worldly lusts"*** are two of the besetting sins that go hand in hand. Yield or give in to one of these sins and soon you will be yielding to the other. Even some who claim to be "Christians" today think there is nothing wrong with listening to "rock" music, or smoking a little "pot," or taking a "social drink," or even living with another "Christian" [*Sic!*] out of wedlock. All of these are the sins of the flesh. Do you notice the progression in this? One act of ***"ungodliness"*** leads to another and then another and then another, until one day the person involved is entangled in ***"worldly lusts,"*** and can't break free. God have mercy!

But what does GRACE teach us about these things? GRACE teaches us to deny ***"ungodliness and worldly lusts."*** In ***Luke 9:23*** the Lord explicitly stated, ***"If any man will come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow Me."*** Then in ***Romans 12:1-2*** the inspired Apostle wrote, ***"I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect will of God."*** Folks, this is what GRACE is teaching the true believer every day. Do you claim to be a true believer? If so, are you listening to your teacher? Well...??

The third, fourth and fifth subjects listed in this text are also linked together; ***".....that.....we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world."***

Folks, over and over again GRACE teaches us throughout the New Testament to live ***“soberly.”*** Some variation of this word in the Greek text occurs 17 times in the New Testament.

Some who are unlearned in the Scriptures immediately associate this word with sobriety as opposed to drunkenness. It has no such meaning in the Scriptures. Rather, living “sober” and “soberly” in the Scriptures literally means to *“be vigilant, watchful, temperate, and sound minded.”*

Some people associate this word with being “somber.” In other words, never joking, teasing, laughing, smiling, or engaging in anything that is “pleasurable.” How utterly silly! Read ***John 10:10*** and ***15:11***. Anyone who seriously studies the Scriptures knows that God’s people are to be a happy people; a people whose lives are filled with joy and laughter and contentment. What is forbidden is giving one’s self over to such constant “foolishness” that your testimony for Christ becomes useless because people never take anything you say or do seriously. Constant “foolishness” is sin! While God’s people are to enjoy the blessings of life that our Lord so richly bestows upon us, living ***“soberly”*** means that we should never forget that our purpose in life is to witness for our Lord and seek to bring others to Christ. We can only accomplish this by living ***“righteously, and godly”*** ourselves.

The truth is, if we live ***“soberly,”*** according to the meaning of the word in the Scriptures, we will also live ***“righteously and godly,”*** and our life will be a blessing to others, and bring honor and glory to Christ. This is what our Teacher wants for us.

These are the things GRACE is teaching God’s people every day of our lives. Now I ask again, *“Are you listening to your teacher?”*

Now we come to the last two subjects that GRACE is teaching God’s people.

Our Scripture text says that ***“the grace of God”*** teaches ***“us”*** true believers that we are to live our lives ***“Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Savior Jesus Christ.”*** Our readers should notice that these two subjects are also linked together; the ***“blessed hope, and the glorious appearing.”*** The first subject is the hope held in the hearts and minds of believers that gives them encouragement, inspiration, and incentive to faithfully keep on serving the Lord until His own ***“glorious appearing”*** in the heavens [*the second subject*]. This is what GRACE is teaching all *true believers* every day that we live.

Oh my! What a shock! When we consider these explicit statements in God’s Word, it appears that more than half of the class is sound asleep, or in open rebellion against the Teacher. They aren’t listening!

Folks, you know this is true! Most of the churches and pastors that call themselves "Christian" in America today, never study about, preach about, or even seriously discuss Bible prophecy and the return of the Lord Jesus Christ to resurrect and rapture His people to glory. These apostate Laodicean churches, and their "hireling" pastors, have no "**blessed hope.**" They gave up their "**blessed hope**" in order to settle down in this present world, and live the "good life." Sic!

No, I'm not being judgmental nor making false accusations. Just take a look at the weekly "church page" in your own local newspaper. It is like reading the comic page, except that I'm not amused. I don't find it "funny." The weekly "church page" in our local newspaper tells about so-called "Christian" churches who are sponsoring ballet classes, karate classes, classes in art, painting, and culture, handicraft and home decorating classes, yoga classes, exercise classes, classes for divorcees, single parents, and expectant mothers, classes on how to manage your money and succeed in business, and on and on and on; ad nauseum.

In the name of Almighty God, what ever happened to teaching and preaching the pure, unadulterated gospel of Christ? What ever happened to warning the lost to "**flee from the wrath to come?**" What ever happened to preaching about the "**signs of the times,**" and preparing God's people to meet their Lord? Whatever happened to good old "expository" preaching, where God's people learn what God's Word is really saying to them? You won't find any of this in these apostate Laodicean churches today. Yet these Laodicean "religionists" claim to be "Christians." Sic! If they are, then it is obvious that they sure aren't listening to their Teacher.

## Conclusion

My critics sometimes accuse me of "going off the deep end" on the Second Coming of Christ. Folks, I didn't know that faithfully listening to our Teacher would cause God's people to "go off the deep end." In fact, throughout my ministry I have believed that faithfully listening to the teachings of God's Word would result in great blessing and reward to God's faithful people. Let's just see what our Teacher says about this.....

***"Because thou hast kept the Word of My patience, I also will keep thee from the hour of temptation [peirasmos....testing], which shall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth," Revelation 3:10.***

Folks, this verse tells us explicitly that God's people who have listened to their Teacher, enabling them to faithfully keep "**the Word**" of His patience, are going to escape the coming terrible Tribulation. The Lord Himself said He would keep us "**from**" it, not deliver us "out" of it. If this upsets your "theology," maybe you ought to quit running your mouth so much, just be still and get serious about studying the Word, and then carefully listen to what GRACE is teaching God's people every day of our lives.

Off the deep end? Hogwash! GRACE teaches every true believer that every day of our lives, we are to live ***“Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Savior Jesus Christ,” Titus 2:11-13.***

ARE YOU LISTENING TO YOUR TEACHER?



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