

Come Again

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Preacher: Jonathan Chancey

[0 : 00] Amen. Please take your Bibles and open them up this morning to the book of Titus.

We are continuing our series in the book of Titus this morning, and we will be in chapter 2, verses 11 through 15 this morning. Chapter 2, verses 11 through 15.

If you're using the few Bibles there in front of you, you can find that on page 938. So if you did not bring a Bible of your own, it'll be here on the screen behind me, but I encourage you to have a Bible open in front of you, because we'll be flipping around a few other places as well, and you can find that on page 938.

Titus 2, 11 through 15. Follow along with me as I read. 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, 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.

Declare these things. Exhort and rebuke with all authority. Let no one disregard you. Let's pray once more. Lord, this is your word.

[1 : 42] Father, this word is so full of treasures for us to uncover and explore and cherish. And so we pray that we would do that now. Would you help us to grasp, for the first time or for the thousandth time, help us to grasp the goodness of you and your glory, the goodness of the doctrine of God.

We pray this in Christ's name. Amen. There is a poem that I think about often. I don't know many poems, but this is one of the few that I know.

It's one of my favorite quotes from John Bunyan. It's not Paul Bunyan, the big lumberjack with the big blue ox. John Bunyan, the great Puritan. It says this, Run, John, run, the law demands, but gives us neither feet nor hands.

Far better news the gospel brings. It bids us fly and gives us wings. Another version by Ralph Erskine.

It says it like this, A rigid matter was the law, demanding brick, denying straw. But when with gospel tongue it sings, it bids me fly and gives me wings.

[3 : 00] Here's what it means. The law, it makes demands, but it provides no power to accomplish what it demands. But the gospel provides both the power and the capacity to live a life of godliness.

See, our capacity for godliness, it does not come from us. We can't muster up the strength to be godly. We have no ability in ourself to keep the law of God, to please God on our own.

We have to look outward, out of ourself. That's called faith. Looking outward, out of yourself, to find that strength. You know, our passage this morning begins with the word for.

You see that here in verse 11. For the grace of God has appeared. That word for is a connector. It is connecting this passage, our passage this morning, to the passage right before it.

What Paul has just said right before it. You know, sometimes we treat the Bible like it's disconnected. Like Paul somehow forgot what he was saying last week, and now he picks up with some totally new thought this week, and he's disconnected.

[4 : 11] The Bible isn't written like that. The Bible was written by people, humans. This book, Titus, is a letter written by a person. He was divinely inspired by the Spirit of God, yes, but he's a person who uses words in the same way that we do, who uses thoughts in the same way that we do, who uses words to argue in the same way that we do.

So when he says, for the grace of God has appeared, we know that he's given a reason. He's given a basis, an explanation, a foundation for what he has just commanded us in our passage last week,

and we do this all the time.

Let's go get lunch, for because I'm feeling hungry. Let's go to bed, for because I'm feeling tired.

Let's get dressed, for because it's time to go to church.

Paul has been building a case here in the book of Titus that faith accords with godliness. Christians should not, like the Cretans were doing, should not profess to know God with our mouths, but then deny him with our actions.

If we say that we have received new life in Christ, but nothing is new about our life, Paul says something is dramatically wrong.

[5 : 32] And so Paul showed us last week what godliness might look like for us, for every member of the church. If you were here last week, there was something for all of us here in chapter 2, verses 1 through 10.

There was instructions for old men, young men, older women, younger women, servants in the church, and servants in the home. Every single one of us in Christ is called to a life that is distinct from the world around us.

He gave us commands last week. But you may have left last week wondering, how do I do that?

How do I do that?

How could I possibly live a godly life? What's the basis or the power or the motivation for living a life like this?

Hopefully you didn't, but you may have left last week discouraged, feeling like I could never live up to what Paul has described here in verses 1 through 10.

[6 : 30] So this morning, Paul brings you good news. He says, for the grace of God has appeared.

Last week he bid us fly, this week he gives us wings. And we should take note here this morning that this is distinctly different from every other religion in the world.

Every world religion gives commands. Every religion gives instructions. Every religion has expectations. No other religion gives the power to do it. Every other religion says, hey, here's how you get to our God.

Here's how you do it. Good luck. Earn it. Do it. Do better. Try better. Work harder. Be better. Be the best you can be and maybe, hopefully, you'll make it.

Church, we need to know that's not how Christianity works. The gospel says God saves. God calls. God trains.

[7 : 31] God redeems. God justifies. God sanctifies. God preserves. God sustains. God purifies. God glorifies. God.

God is about God. And with that confidence and that dependence upon God, we pursue godliness as his children.

As his children. No other religion in the world says anything close to that. Our passage this morning, it roots all of our efforts for godliness, all of our pursuit of the Lord, all of our striving, all of our labor in the good news of what God has done and what God has promised in the gospel of Jesus Christ. This gospel is the motivation and the power for godly living. So Paul gives us two life-changing truths here in our passage this morning. Two life-changing truths.

This is our outline this morning. If you're taking notes, I encourage you to follow along this way. This is our motivation and our power for godliness. Two life-changing truths.

[8 : 41] Christ has come and Christ will come again. Two life-changing truths. If we understand these two truths, we will pursue a life of godliness here in the present age.

Two truths. Christ has come and Christ will come again. First, Paul says, live this way, be godly, pursue godliness.

Why? What's the basis of our pursuit? Verse 11, he says, for the grace of God has appeared. And so he says, be holy, pursue godliness, for, because, here's the basis, because Christ has come.

See, Paul is looking backwards to what we call the incarnation of Christ. He's talking about the first coming of Jesus. The incarnation of the son of God.

Christians, we don't believe that Jesus was just another man, just another good teacher, just another religious figure. We believe that just over 2,000 years ago a miracle happened.

[9 : 50] The son of God became man. And Paul says, your holiness now, today, in this present age, is only possible because of something that happened 2,000 years ago.

But why is that? What is it, specifically, about this event 2,000 years ago that's still transforming lives today?

Look with me to verse 11. It is interesting, isn't it, that Paul is talking about the coming of Christ, but he doesn't say Christ has appeared, does he?

What does he say? The grace of God has appeared. The grace of God has appeared.

The first coming of Christ is synonymous with the appearing of God's grace. Of course, God's grace has appeared all throughout the Old Testament.

[10:49] This isn't the first time we see God's saving power, God's grace appearing here. God has graciously promised and called and redeemed Israel. He's made gracious promises to Noah and Abraham and David all throughout the Old Testament.

His grace is all over every page. But the appearing of Christ is the clearest and most spectacular appearing of the grace of God.

This isn't just grace extended as it was in the Old Testament, this is grace embodied in the person of Christ. Now, at risk of overstatement here, there may not be a more easily misunderstood, quickly polarizing, toxically abused doctrine than the doctrine of God's grace.

Now, it is important that we get this right. And one of the reasons why I love the Apostle Paul is he is all the time correcting our misunderstandings of God's grace and showing us how to live in light of that grace of God for the glory of God.

So look with me again at verse 11 and we see two functions of God's grace here in this verse. Two functions of God's grace. Grace saves and grace trains.

[12:11] Grace saves and grace trains. He says here, verse 11, the grace of God has appeared bringing salvation for all people and training us to renounce ungodliness and worldly passions and to live self-controlled, upright, godly lives in the present age.

See, you gotta have both here. You can't have just one. God's grace came saving and God's grace came training. Paul says, grace came bringing salvation for all people.

That promise that God made to the Jews in the Old Testament, I will be your God and you will be my people is now through Christ extended to all peoples of the earth.

That's good news for us Gentiles, right? Amen? Amen? On the basis of Christ's perfect obedience, his sacrificial death on the cross in our place, in the place of sinners, his victorious resurrection from the grave received by grace through faith, all people can be saved from the condemnation and the eternal damnation earned from their sin.

Now, not every individual will be saved. When he says, grace came bringing salvation for all people, don't get hung up there. That doesn't mean that every individual person will be saved.

[13:42] only those who hear the good news of Christ, only those who hear the words of the gospel and respond with saving faith and repentance in Christ Jesus will be saved.

He's not saying all people will be saved. What he's saying here is that there are no ethnic, racial, social, regional, political limitations on the grace of God.

God. This grace is made available to all the peoples of the earth. And so we pray every Sunday morning. We pray. Not just for what's going on here in Allendale, not just for what's going on in South Carolina.

We pray every week for the nations. And you might notice, often we pray for a people group in a specific nation. A people group. We prayed last week for the people of Macau.

And specifically, in Macau, we prayed for the people group the Hui people group. The Hui people group. They're a frontier people. That means that they have never heard the gospel.

[14:48] They have zero access to the gospel. To our knowledge, no one from the people group, the Hui people group, have ever heard the name Jesus. And they have zero access to it on their own.

So someone must go. The word must come to them. They'll perish without it. I don't know how many people God will choose to save from the Hui people group.

But I do know that every tribe, tongue, and nation will be gathered around the throne of God in glory. He's promised us that.

That's what grace accomplished in the first coming of Christ. And so we pray. And so we send missionaries. So we support missionary efforts. So we proclaim the gospel in every corner of the earth with the confidence that God will do what he's promised.

He will save all the peoples of the earth. That's what Paul's saying here. Christ came. The grace of God came bringing salvation for all the peoples of the earth.

[15 : 54] So we can say it like this. Not every person will be saved without distinction. No, excuse me. Run that back. Run that back. Not every person will be saved without exception, but all peoples will be saved without distinction.

Say that again. Not every person will be saved without exception, meaning all peoples are saved, but all peoples will be saved without distinction.

even you. Even me. Here's what this means for us, church. No one in this room can say, man, I wish I could get in on that saving grace of God, but I don't qualify.

Christ's perfect life, not for me. His sacrificial death, not for me. I'm too old. I don't fit the criteria here. I'm too poor. I don't fit the criteria here. I vote this way.

I act this way. I come from this background. I've done this. I've done that. I'm addicted to this. I'm addicted to that. Whatever the excuse may be, church, grace by definition is undeserved.

[17 : 02] The very definition of grace means you don't fit the criteria. The only criteria here is that you know you don't deserve what God is giving to you in Christ.

You cannot earn His grace or it's no longer grace. I shared this example with someone the other day trying to explain this to them. This is like if a child does something they know they shouldn't do. Okay, this is my life. All right? This is where my mind goes with illustrations. Y'all bear with me. The parent saw it the whole way up and down. They know there's no denying it.

Something wrong has happened. The child knows that they deserve punishment. They know that they've messed up. They've been caught in the act. But as an act of mercy, the parent says, I will withhold the punishment you deserve.

That's mercy. Withholding what you deserve. Mercy, you don't get what you deserve. But grace goes a step further than that, doesn't it? Grace says, I saw what you did.

[18 : 08] I know you deserve punishment. But instead, I'm going to give you the biggest slice of cake I can fit on this plate. I'm going to reward you as if you had obeyed perfectly.

You deserve punishment, but instead, you get a big old slice of cake because I love you. I'm going to reward you as if you never did anything wrong, as if you're absolutely perfect. That's grace.

Mercy holds back what you do deserve, namely punishment for your sin. Grace gives you what you could never deserve. The blessing and the favor of God.

Salvation from our sin and eternal life in Christ Jesus, our Lord. God's grace saves. But not only that, we don't stop there.

God's grace trains. Look to verse 11 again. Look to verse 11 again. He says, The grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation for all people and training us to renounce ungodliness and worldly passions and to live self-controlled, upright, and godly lives in the present age.

[19 : 25] See, the grace of God came saving and the grace of God came training. You can't have one without the other. This is what we've been seeing all through the book of Titus, isn't it?

If you have been given the gift of salvation, you have been enrolled, enlisted, you have been given the gift of sanctification. And that pace and that progress may look different from person to person, Christian to Christian, but the trajectory is the same.

Everyone who's been saved by grace will be trained by grace for godliness in the present age. In other words, Jesus Christ did not just come to save you and leave you as you are.

Jesus Christ came to save you and to change who you are. He did not come to save you and leave you as you are. Come as you are to Christ and expect that he will transform you from the inside out.

You will not be the same. Jesus Christ did not come just to save you. He came to transform you.

That change process, it begins the moment you put your faith in Christ, but that's not the end for us, Christian.

[20 : 40] It continues all the way until either we die or Christ returns. Your coming to faith in Christ was the beginning of your Christian walk. It's not the end. It's the beginning.

We've all been enrolled in a lifelong training program called sanctification. That means you are being made holy. We've not arrived, church.

There are parts of you and there are parts of me that need changing. Praise God, by his grace, he's doing it. Do not buy cheap grace that saves but does not train.

Christians are those who, because of God's saving grace, welcome God's training grace in their lives. And so we say things like, I'm struggling with this particular sin.

Can you help me? Will you pray for me? I can't seem to put this to death. I'm wrestling with this in my life. I can't seem to understand it but I know God is at work in me. He's working in me through

this.

[21 : 45] He's training me. Christians depend on God's grace to save and his grace to train. We don't say things like, I'm good just the way I am.

Thank you. I don't need any help. Thank you. No change needed here. I'm fine. I said my prayer when I was 10 and that's it for me. Now I check out and I just got the free pass to glory.

I'm good. Thank you. No. No change needed here. One sign that God's grace is at work in you is that you begin to realize how much you need it every day.

Every day. you begin to depend on it. You want more of God not less. You want less of sin not more. You begin to realize that by God's grace not on your own strength and not on your own effort not your own grit but by God's grace alone you can say no to sin.

Church, that's a miracle. And you want to do it. By God's grace alone you can say no to anger. By God's grace you can say no to drunkenness.

[22 : 57] You can say no to sexual addiction to pornography. You can say no to gossip and to slander. You can say no to divisive behavior. You can say no to laziness or gluttonousness.

You have been rescued from slavery to sin and now are being trained in godliness. So we pursue it by the grace of God. God. If you want to grow in godliness remember Christ has come to save and to train.

But not only that second remember Christ will come again. The second life changing truth here in our passage.

Christ has come and Christ will come again. If we want to be moved and motivated toward godliness we not only look backwards to what Christ has done we must also look forward to what's to come.

Christ will come again. Look with me to verse 13. Verse 13 here. Paul says we are 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.

[24 : 27] If you write in your Bibles I want you to take a pen and mark these two things down here. If you're using a pew Bible go ahead and write in that one too. That's okay. Next person can see this note.

I want you to circle up in verse 11 where it says the grace of God has appeared and then again down in verse 13 where it says the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ. See these these two appearances are everything for us. We have the first appearing the first coming of Christ appearing bringing salvation for undeserving sinners and then the second coming of Christ the appearing of the glory of God our risen Savior who will come and will finish what he came to do. See our lives are lived here in the middle. We're stuck in the middle between these two comings. We live in between the two advents of Christ. That's the present age that Paul is talking about here in verse 12 and so to live godly lives in this present age here in the middle.

Christians are those who are constantly looking backwards to the first coming of Christ looking backwards to the first appearing of God's grace grace embodied and we are looking forward constantly in hope of the coming of Christ the appearing of the glory of God.

[25 : 58] I remember when I was younger I'd be willing to bet I'm not alone in this. I was taught that before you cross the street you need to what? Look both ways.

Yeah. And sometimes I'd even tell me hey look that way and then look that way and then hey you need to look that way again. Something might have changed. You gotta look both ways. And then you can safely take a step forward.

But it was clear you don't just go stepping without looking. And that's a recipe for disaster. You have to look both ways before you can safely take a step forward.

That's what Paul is saying here. Christian before we can take a single step towards Christ likeness. Before we can take a single step towards godliness.

We can't do it without looking both ways. To the grace of God that has come and to the glory of God that is to come. If you want to take a step forward in godliness this is where you look first.

[27 : 01] first. Then you can take a step. Then you can safely progress. Paul says here in verse 13 he says we are waiting for our blessed hope.

We are waiting for his coming. We are waiting. Christians by definition are a waiting people. And I know I'm not the only one in the room who doesn't like to wait. Amen? Amen? But this isn't waiting like you wait for a hurricane.

I don't think I was the only one my wife and I who stayed up Thursday evening watching the radar waiting waiting waiting waiting when is he going to get here? What's he going to do? Woke up Friday morning wind rain check the radar again check the forecast waiting is it going to get worse? Is it going to do more damage? What kind of destruction is this going to bring?

We don't wait like that for the coming of Christ. Christ. Unbelievers ought to wait like that for the coming of Christ. But for us in Christ this is a hopeful waiting.

[28 : 13] It is a hopeful waiting. Not wishful waiting it is the Christian hope. The Christian hope is certain. This is good news. Christ will return.

Christ will accomplish what he set out to accomplish. Christ will finish what he began in you and we are to wait for it with patience and the Bible says with eagerness.

You know one of the most common ways that the Bible talks about the second coming of Christ is eagerness. I want to take you to just a few passages here. You can mark this down for later.

Eagerness. Are you eager for the return of Christ? Romans 8 23 says not only the creation but we ourselves who have the first fruits of the spirit grown inwardly as we wait eagerly for our adoption as sons.

The redemption of our bodies. You hear that word? Eager. Galatians 5 5 for through the spirit by faith we ourselves eagerly wait for the hope of righteousness.

[29 : 19] That's what we're waiting for. The hope of righteousness is coming. Are we are we eager for it to come? Hebrews 9 28 So Christ having been offered once to bear the sins of many that's his first coming Christ Christ came to save grace appeared to save to bear the sins of many will appear a second time not to deal with sin but to save those who are eagerly waiting for him.

See we are eagerly waiting our final salvation the fulfillment of what he came to do. This is a joyful a happy and eager a hopeful a joy filled waiting and it's it's difficult not because we dread what's coming but because we cannot wait for it to get here.

I saw on the news again as I'm sure many of you did there were people stranded in Florida because of the hurricane out standing on the top of their cars waiting for help to come. Christian are waiting as if we were were stranded here waiting for deliverance to come.

Knowing it has been promised knowing knowing he's kind of he's going to come he's going to arrive we don't know when we don't know at what moment he'll be here but he will come he will come he will rescue us he will come and so we wait with eager anticipation how eager are you for his return.

Does it consume your thoughts and influence your actions you know if we if we really set our our minds and our thoughts and our hearts there thought hard had our hearts full of longing for this this return of Christ I'm certain there would be an explosive difference in the way we go about our lives.

[31 : 09] see our holiness is fueled by our eagerness not only is this a hopeful waiting it is also a holy waiting our holiness this holiness that that Paul is calling us to it's fueled by eagerness waiting longing looking anticipating the return of Christ we've already spent time here so I won't belabor the point but it's clear Paul he's bringing it up again here and he reminds us again in verse 14 of why Christ came what Christ came to do look at verse 14 says he gave himself for us to redeem us from all unlawing it from all lawlessness and to purify for himself a people for his own possession to save you and to change you to make you holy to to redeem you and to purify you those he came to save he promises to purify so that we would profess to know him with our mouths and adorn the doctrine of God with our actions and so our time of waiting now church is a time of being made holy he will not leave you as you are two main ways that this happens in our lives one is what happens to us I'll tell you something that you already know that terrible things happen to everyone in this life believer non-believer tall short rich poor all of us suffer in this life becoming a

Christian will not protect you from suffering quite the opposite but what a difference it makes for us in Christ to be able to to look ahead and to know and to remember that Christ will return that he's coming to make all things right that we may not understand and and may not quite grasp what God is doing but we know that God is at work that he's using every trial in the present age to prepare his people for glory for the believer in Christ God is using every second every every moment every trial that we endure to purify you in Christ and to prepare you for eternity with him so Christians we believe that all of our lives every moment is ordained by God for our good and for his glory he is purifying us for himself and what this means Christian is that our trials are not meaningless God is at work your sickness is not meaningless your suffering is not meaningless your struggle is not meaningless God is at work I know there are are many in our church family who are are struggling

with all sorts of of sickness all sorts of loss all sorts of of suffering if you are in Christ you are walking through purifying fire God is preparing you for the glory to come are you paying attention are you looking for what he's doing in you the second way that we grow in purity the second way that we grow in holiness in this present age is by our own active pursuit of it by our own active pursuit of it by the grace of God God gives us the desire to grow gives us the desire to pursue him and so we take it upon ourselves to commit to pursuing him through the ordinary means of grace Bible reading prayer confessing sin corporate worship gathering with other saints together committing to to walk alongside other believers this is what D.A. Carson calls grace driven effort I love this quote from D.A. Carson he says this people do not drift towards holiness apart from grace driven effort people do not gravitate toward godliness prayer obedience to scripture faith and delight in the Lord we drift toward compromise and call it tolerance we drift toward disobedience and call it freedom we drift toward superstition and call it faith we cherish the indiscipline of lost self-control and call it relaxation we slouch toward prayerlessness and delude ourselves into thinking we have escaped legalism we slide toward godlessness and convince ourselves we have been liberated you know another way we misunderstand the grace of God is to say we don't have to do anything it's all of God it's all God's grace I can sit back and relax I don't need to to pray I don't need to open my Bible I don't need to share my faith I don't have to pursue godliness that sounds a lot like the Cretans doesn't it that sounds a lot like the error here in Crete no God's grace empowers your pursuit of godliness God's grace is what undergirds and empowers all of your efforts to please him it is God who works in you to will and to work for his good pleasure church you will not grow in godliness apart from grace driven effort let's not deceive ourselves church if we are not pursuing godliness we are not neutral and we will not drift towards holiness our natural drift is away from the Lord I'll tell you I tend to drift more towards television easier than I drift towards opening my Bible I'll be honest with you I drift more towards looking at my phone than I do towards prayer it's discipline it's grace driven discipline that will will bring about the change that we need to see in our lives as we pursue the Lord together how can you grow in grace driven effort what are some areas of of of slack that we can shore up this week with grace driven effort it is hopeful it is holy and finally one more here this is a helpful waiting this is to be a a helpful waiting

Paul says he gave himself to redeem us to purify for himself a people for his own possession who are zealous for good works this is one of the effects of God's grace in us he makes a people who are zealous for good works in other words Christ Christ came to create a people who share and extend the heart of God to others and while we wait for Christ to return we're not sitting on our hands and and biding our time and watching the the minutes on the clock roll by we are to be actively seeking ways to do good works to be helpful to be helpful now Christians ought to care more about doing good works than anybody else in the world and we ought to expend ourselves more for the good of others than anyone else in the world not because we earn God's favor by our good works but because as we experience the life-changing grace of God in our lives as we experience his goodness towards us in Christ we can't help but extend that same grace and love and kindness to others around us we are saved by faith alone as Martin Luther says but the faith that saves is never alone have you heard that quote before we are saved by faith alone but the faith that saves is never alone he means it's always accompanied by good works

[39 : 53] Christ came to create zealots for good works those who are passionate about about extending the heart of God to others church Christ will return and he will reward every good work done for his glory in the present age and so we we live every day in the present age in light of that coming day when Christ will appear and the glory of God will be made manifest one practical thing for us to pray I think this week Lord make us zealous for good works it's a dangerous prayer but I encourage you to pray Lord make me zealous for good works show me what the needs are around me show me how I can love my neighbor as myself show me how I can be selfless show me how I can how I can exhibit the love of Christ towards others this week let me show the power of your grace by my godliness and by my good works let our light so shine before others that they may see our good works and give glory to our father who is in heaven amen the book of Titus calls you

Christian to be distinct not just in our pursuit of godliness but in the basis of our pursuit we don't seek to earn our way to God by our goodness our chances of earning God's approval earning God's pleasure do not change one decimal point with our holiness with our self-improvement rather we rest on the good news of the gospel run John run the law demands but gives us neither feet nor hands far better news the gospel brings which bids us fly and gives us wings see our salvation and

our sanctification are found in the fact that Christ has come the grace of God has appeared and our our certain hope of glory our hope that that Christ will accomplish what he came to do is found in the fact that that God's glory is coming the second coming of Christ all of grace church we're going to stand and sing in just a moment a hymn that

I know is familiar that's everyone in the room we've probably sung this a thousand times before but I want you to consider these words as we sing them don't let it just be routine repetition let it be worship worship him for the truths of what we sing amazing grace how sweet the sound grace that saved a wretch like me I once was lost but now I'm found was blind but now I see grace saving grace redeeming grace rescuing it was grace that taught my heart to fear and grace my fears relieved how precious did that grace appear the hour I first believed grace training grace teaching grace comforting grace assuring through many dangers toils and snares I have already come tis grace that brought me safe thus far and grace will lead me home grace preserving grace sustaining grace grace drawing us bringing us all the way through the trial to glory when we've been there ten thousand years bright shining as the sun we have no less days grace to sing God's praise than when we first begun grace glorifying grace exulting in the glory of God let's pray father we praise you for your grace at work in us who believe we praise you that godliness is not something that we could ever dream up on our own that our efforts though they're weak lord father we pray and we thank you we praise you that you've provided everything we need for life and godliness through the gospel of Christ and father if there are any here who have not yet received that saving grace we pray even now that you would you would call them draw them to yourself and for the rest of us lord we pray for growth in godliness for your glory we ask in Christ's name amen