

We all have struggles and every struggle is an opportunity for God to train, teach, disciple us and to reveal something by His grace.

Titus 2:11-15 *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.*

Our Father's hand is firmly on the wheel of our lives, and He won't let go. Just as when a child sits on a dad's lap in a car and thinks he is driving as dad unknowingly guides and will not let go. The Father's hand upon our lives is His grace. **Verse 11** *The grace of God has appeared...* Titus personifies grace in the person of Jesus Christ bringing salvation and then meets us the next morning in the struggle as the battle begins. Paul in his writings uses all kinds of metaphors of struggle. The grace that appears is the grace that remains. It won't leave.

Five things the grace of God does for us in our battles:

1) God reveals the true enemy by grace. Verse 12 *The ungodliness and worldly passions* of every human are revealed and to be renounced. As grace shines light, the true problems in our lives are revealed. A crisis will reveal things but grace will help us and train us to make the right decisions. We get so consumed by the battle that we often don't recognize that the grace of God is at work.

2) God trains us to fight patiently, with sanctifying grace. Verse 12 Grace is the very essence and the power of God that will train, teach, and instruct us! It meets us where we are at and takes us where God wants us to go. It teaches us to renounce and resist and fight the battle. We renounce sin with the Word of God. Speak the Word. We have weapons - Jesus, the Holy Spirit, the Word, and the grace of God. Get the Word in us so that the Holy Spirit can teach us how to use it as a weapon. Grace coaches us how to fight, win, and live *self-controlled, upright, and godly lives*.

3) Grace meets us in the waiting room. Verse 13 *...waiting for our blessed hope, the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ.* The waiting room is where He meets us and trains us to hope - to anticipate with pleasure *the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ*. To anticipate with pleasure means to look and receive something favorably. When we are waiting, God needs access to us. No one likes to wait but grace comes while we're waiting and seeks an opportunity to train us. He knows what we need.

One thing He might want to reveal in us while waiting is unbelief. Unbelief is the root of all sin because we don't trust God. The waiting room can reveal things and put us back into being *zealous for good works*. Prayer is the work we are to do and the waiting room can show us where to pray.

4) God will anchor us back to the cross with His sanctifying grace. Verse 14 *...who gave Himself for us to redeem us from all lawlessness and to purify for Himself a people for his own possession.* Christ came to redeem us, to loosen us, from lawlessness and ungodliness. And also to purify. God's waiting room and struggle gets us back in the game not out of the game. The cross resolved the sin in our lives but it continually draws us back to remember what God did for us.

5) God calls us to help others in the battle with sanctifying grace. Verse 15 *Declare these things; exhort and rebuke with all authority.* Grace is a giveaway blessing - minister grace to others. God gives grace to the humble. Keep it flowing by giving it away. You connect with people when you share your struggles. *Declare these things...* don't keep them to yourselves. The good news we share is that God helps us through our struggles. Let no one depreciate your sanctifying grace. Tell others about what works for us. There is authority in our own testimony.

Remembering one truth at the moment of your trial will bring the beginning of our change... Sanctifying grace is at work! The grace of God is bigger. The enemy reminds us of sins and failures, but the Holy Spirit reminds us of our future. Remembering is the first place of change. Be more aware of the grace of God at work.

John 8 tells about the woman caught in adultery. Jesus stepped in with grace and stopped the penalty for her. Then gave her instructions to go and sin no more. Jesus is full of grace and full of truth for each one of His children.

Are you anchored to the cross in your battle? How?

What does "sanctifying grace" mean?

Where have you missed applying God's grace to a situation or relationship?