

## WAITING FOR JESUS BRINGS PEACE

II Peter 3: 14-18 – Pastor Richard P. Carlson

Millions will not accept Jesus as the Promised Messiah, but there is no denying, He is. The Great “I Am” is who He claimed to be. The Lord Jesus Christ promised He is coming a second time, to rapture His church and then that He is coming with His church, His saints, His raptured Bride, to restore the earth. Christ is coming again soon. The Old Testament Hebrew word Messiah means “the anointed One.” It is translated into Greek as Christos, Christ. The Old Testament promise was described in Isaiah 61: 1-2, saying, “The Spirit of the Lord GOD is upon Me, because the LORD has anointed Me to bring good news to the poor; He has sent Me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to those who are bound; to proclaim the year of the LORD's favor, and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all who mourn.” This One and only ultimate Anointed Leader, God’s Son, Jesus, God come in the flesh, would come from the tribe of Judah—Genesis 49: 10. He did. He was promised to be the descendant of King David – II Samuel 7: 16. He was. It was promised He would be a priest like Melchizedek—Psalm 110: 4. He was. He was promised to be a prophet and deliverer like Moses—Deuteronomy 18: 15-19. He was. He was promised to be the Lord’s choice servant—Isaiah 42: 1-4, a bruised reed He would not break and a faintly burning wick He would not quench, as He faithfully brings forth justice. He was and He did. He was promised to be the Prince of Peace, with the government upon His shoulders—Isaiah 9: 6-7. He is! When our Messiah was born of a virgin, Isaiah 7: 14, three decades later, when Jesus began His public ministry, He calmly read the prophecy of His Messiahship in His hometown of Nazareth from the scroll of Isaiah in Isa. 61: 1-2. Then Jesus rolled up the scroll and calmly announced, “Today this Scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing.”

We are living today in the light of that great coming Day. Pagans today, who don’t even believe in God are drawn to prophecy like moths to the fire or the light, not realizing that Bible prophecy warns sinners to repent and flee from the wrath to come. Although Christ has not yet returned in fiery judgment, that frightening day will come with disastrous consequences for all those who have not repented of their sins. Notice verse 10. Christ’s return will come. Notice “the Day of the Lord will come.” Christ’s return will be sudden, unexpected, and disastrous. Christ’s return will not give anyone outside of Jesus anywhere to escape. Notice that hiding sin will not happen—for that day will expose the truth. That verb exposed can be translated “found out.” This coming day of judgment will destroy all the proud works of man. Notice v. 7. Since Christ will return in judgment, we should be holy people, looking for and hastening the coming of the day of God. Notice verses 11-12. God’s judgment will allow God to judge wickedness so what we are looking and waiting for will happen. Notice v. 13.

Peter had come many miles since the night he betrayed his Lord, and then went out into the night and wept bitterly. As Jesus prophesied, three times Peter said, I do not know him. I swear, and he swore with an oath, “I do not know this man.” (Mt.

26: 72) We remember that night that Jesus told His disciples, “You are those who have stayed with Me in My trials.” (Mt. 22: 28) But then Jesus told all His disciples, Mt. 26: 31, “You all will fall away because of Me this night!” Peter answered the Lord, in v. 33, saying, “Though all fall away because of You, I will never fall away.” Then Jesus got specific with His leader of the disciples in Luke 22: 31-32, saying, “Simon, Simon, behold Satan demanded to have you, that he might sift you like wheat, but I have prayed for you that your faith may not fail. And when you have turned/repented again, strengthen your brothers.” You know Peter again protested to Jesus—Luke 22; 33-34, saying, “Lord, I am ready to go with you to prison and to death. Jesus said, “I tell you, Peter, the rooster will not crow this day until you deny three times that you know Me.”

Peter’s two epistles are just that—strengthening his brothers and all of us. In I Peter 5: 12, Peter said, “I have written briefly to you, exhorting you and declaring that this is the true grace of God. Stand firm in it.” In II Peter 1: 2, Peter tells us who Jesus is, calling him “our God and Savior, Jesus Christ.” In II Peter 1: 13-14, Peter let us know he knew his time was short, before his martyrdom. He wrote, “I think it right, as long as I am in this body, to stir you up by way of reminder, since I know that the putting off of my body will be soon, as our Lord Jesus Christ made clear to me.” Beloved, Peter was now a Holy Spirit-filled man, knowing God was holding him fast, even as He will hold us fast. Our text today is II Peter 3: 14-18, and the subject is: What do we do while we wait for the coming of the Lord? We are not to be bored or to kill time, or hide our talents, or do nothing. Peter outlines for us in these five verses, five duties we all have as believers while we wait for His return. What are these five duties?

### **WE MUST BE READY FOR JESUS, WAITING FOR HIS RETURN. (I.)**

Notice verse 14, “Since you are waiting for these, speaking of the new heavens and the new earth of verse 13. Notice in both verses we are to be waiting. Our view of the end of history, or time, determines how we live presently. We believe history is going somewhere. We know God has given history a goal. If we fail to be found waiting for Jesus’ return, it will affect us terribly, and eternally. We heard the words this morning in II Peter 3: 4, that mockers will come in the last days, scoffing, and following their own sinful desires, and saying, “Where is the promise of His coming? For ever since the fathers fell asleep, all things are continuing as they were from the beginning of creation.” That Greek word for the last days in II Peter 3: 3 is **eschatos**. If anyone asks you what you believe about eschatology, they are speaking of Christ’s return. The word **eschatos** is mentioned 54 times in the New Testament. The predictions of future events occupy approximately one quarter of all the Bible: The teaching of the Second Coming of Jesus Christ is dealt with in 1,800 passages in the Bible, **318** of these passages, being in the New Testament. Many theological views today have removed the return of Jesus from the center of our theology to the outskirts of following Jesus, as unimportant, too complicated to talk about, and many believers today mock Christians like you and me for believing Jesus is coming soon. Are you ready for the Lord to come? Jesus Himself said in Matthew 24: 35-44, “Heaven and earth will pass away, but My

words will not pass away. But concerning that day and hour no one knows, not even the angels of heaven, nor the Son, but the Father only. For as were the days of Noah, so will be the coming of the Son of Man. For as in those days before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying, and giving in marriage, until the day when Noah entered the ark, and they were unaware until the flood came and swept them all away, so will be the coming of the Son of Man. Then two men will be in the field; one will be taken and one left. Two women will be grinding at the mill; one will be taken and one left. Therefore, stay awake, for you do not know on what day your Lord is coming. But know this, that if the master of the house had known in what part of the night the thief was coming, he would have stayed awake and would not have let his house be broken into. Therefore, you also must be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect.” Our view of the end of history and Jesus’ coming matters. We need to know, as Peter where history is moving. We must weave our view of Jesus’ return deeply into each of our lives. History has a goal that inspires godliness, not just live for today, that inspires worship, not apathy, and that inspires hope, not despair. Secondly,

### **WE MUST BE DILIGENT TO BE FOUND BY JESUS LIVING IN PURITY.**

(II.) Notice verse 14. “Be diligent to be found by Him **without spot** or **blemish.**” The word without spot is **aspilos** and it means unblemished, without defilement. The word without blemish is **amometos** and it means unblameable and without rebuke. Notice carefully the description of these false teachers in the last days, not living in purity--Peter 2:9-22. We must reflect the purity of Jesus who alone is without spot or blemish. John in I John 3: 2-3, saying, “Beloved, now we are children of God, and it has not appeared as yet, what we will be. We know that when He appears, we will be like Him, because we will see Him just as He is. And everyone who has this hope set on Him purifies himself, just as He is pure.” Paul speaks of the second coming of Jesus in I Thessalonians 5: 23-24. Paul agrees with Peter, saying, “Now may the God of peace himself sanctify you completely, and may your whole spirit and soul and body be kept blameless at/until the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. He who calls you is faithful; he will surely do it.” James talks about it in James 5: 7-9, saying, “Be patient, therefore, brothers, until the coming of the Lord. See how the farmer waits for the precious fruit of the earth, being patient about it, until it receives the early and the late rains. You also, be patient. Establish your hearts, for the coming of the Lord is at hand. Do not grumble against one another, brothers, so that you may not be judged; behold, the Judge is standing at the door.” Beloved, if we are critical, mumbling and grumbling, we are not being diligent to be found pure when Jesus comes. Jude says in verses 14-16, “Behold, the Lord comes with ten thousands of his holy ones, to execute judgment on all and to convict all the ungodly of all their deeds of ungodliness that they have committed in such an ungodly way, and of all the harsh things, that ungodly sinners have spoken against Him.” These are grumblers, malcontents, following their own sinful desires; they are loud-mouthed boasters, showing favoritism to gain advantage.” Paul uses the same word in Philippians 2: 14-15, “Do all things without grumbling or disputing that you may be blameless and innocent, children of God without blemish in the midst of a crooked and twisted generation, among whom you shine as lights in the world.”

**WE MUST BE EAGER TO BE FOUND BY JESUS AT PEACE.** (III.) Notice II Peter 3: 14 as this is the last phrase. “Therefore, beloved, since you are waiting for these, be diligent/eager, **spoudadzo** means passionate eagerness and diligence to be found by Him without spot or blemish, **and at peace.** The waiting and hoping for Christ’s second coming, brings peace. This peace is with God and with each other. This peace is a satisfied conscience, because we are living, ready to see the Lord, because we are right with God. We are able to sing, “It is well with my soul.” Because Jesus could come at any moment, we are to pursue peace with God and each other. If there is anyone in our fellowship that you cannot be normal with, loving, kind, caring, at peace, saying “I love you,” make it right, before you stand ashamed at Christ’s coming. This peace, **eirene** literally means to be joined together in full harmony. It is a settledness in our souls. In Jesus’ Sermon on the Mount, He placed purity and peace together, saying in Matthew 5: 8-9, “Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God. Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called the sons of God. Paul agrees with Peter in Romans 12: 18, “If possible, so far as it depends on you, live peaceably with all men/people.”

This peace is a personal peace and a relational peace. One major place Paul agrees with Peter on this matter is found in Philippians 4: 5-9. We read, “Let your reasonableness be known to everyone. The Lord is at hand; (or He is near, coming soon) do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the **peace of God**, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus. Finally, brothers, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is commendable, if there is any excellence, if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things. What you have learned and received and heard and seen in me—practice these things, and **the God of peace** will be with you.”

Notice again the phrase, “be diligent to be found by Him in peace...” Oh, the profound difference for us if at Jesus’ return, He finds us in peace than if we are found fighting against His word and against each other. To the Pergamum church in Revelation 2: 12-17, the risen Christ reports less than diligence by this church to live holy lives, hastening His return. They were teaching the doctrine of Balaam and compromising with evil, including committing acts of immorality. In Revelation 2: 16, Jesus didn’t speak of finding them in peace. Instead, He says, “Repent therefore; or else I am coming to you quickly, and I will make war against them with the sword of My mouth.” A deep feeling we soon will stand in the presence of our holy God, our final Judge, will have a blessed influence on helping us live pure, peaceful lives. Eagerness for peace means we are doing our utmost for His highest, as Oswald Chambers says. If we are growing spiritually when Christ returns, He will find us in peace. Diligently focusing on our relationship of peace with God, will help us have peace with those around us. Proverbs 16: 7 is an amazing report of this, saying, “When a man’s ways are pleasing to the Lord, He makes even his enemies to be at peace with him.” As Elizabeth Elliot explains it, it means we keep doing the next thing God lays before us, peacefully doing His will.

### **WE MUST BE STABLE AND COUNT JESUS' DELAY AS SALVATION.**

(IV.) Notice II Peter 3: 15-17. And count the patience of our Lord as salvation, just as our beloved brother Paul also wrote to you according to the wisdom given him, as he does in all his letters when he speaks in them of these matters. There are some things in them that are hard to understand, which the ignorant and unstable twist to their own destruction, as they do the other Scriptures. You, therefore, beloved, knowing this beforehand, take care that you are not carried away with the error of lawless people and lose your own stability.” Peter is negatively saying a positive—Be established in the truth of Jesus. Don’t get carried away. Don’t lose your stability. Don’t drift away from the harbor of truth. Keep your footing firm. Stand strong and tall, and don’t be knocked over. Peter was lining up as consistent with Paul, against false teachers he warned against in chapter 2. He called Paul his beloved brother. Peter affirmed that Paul’s teaching agreed with his eschatology, but that it often was twisted to the destruction of false teachers. In a word, Peter was saying, “Just because a teacher looks, appears, and acts like a teacher, doesn’t mean he or she has sound doctrine. I’ve heard it well said, “Preaching and teaching are not unique. Many false teachers and preachers are eloquent homileticians, they can sell a false product with amazing power. What makes our message of salvation and the return of Jesus unique is that it is taught in Scripture when we study it as Bereans, accurately handling the Word of truth. As to counting Jesus’ delay in coming as our salvation, please know that if Jesus had returned before I was born or before you were born, we would not be redeemed saints awaiting His return. His delay in waiting for us to be born, reborn, and saved is our salvation. Fifthly,

### **WE MUST GROW IN THE GRACE AND KNOWLEDGE OF OUR LORD.**

(V.) Peter said in II Peter 3: 18, “But grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To Him be the glory both now and to the Day of eternity. Amen. I believe it was Tony Merida who said, “The Christian life is like a bicycle. Once you stop moving forward, you fall off.” J.C. Ryle wrote, “When I speak of a man growing in grace, I mean, simply this—that his sense of sin is becoming deeper, his faith stronger, his hope brighter, his love more extensive, his spiritual mindedness more marked. He feels more of the power of godliness in his own heart. He manifests more of it in his life. He is going on from strength to strength, from faith to faith and from grace to grace.” Sadly, we live in a world where our mental knowledge is rated far above our heart knowledge. Growing in grace is not achieved in seminary, no matter which seminary it is. Someone once said, “Don’t be spiritual tadpoles, with big heads and skinny bodies.” Paul said it well in Romans 11: 33, “Oh, the depth of the riches and wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are His judgments and His inscrutable ways past finding out!” Charles H. Spurgeon in his lectures on ministerial progress, wrote. “Know Jesus. Sit at His feet. Consider His nature, His work, His sufferings, His glory. Rejoice in His presence. Commune with Him from day to day...you cannot fail to be wise if you commune with wisdom; you cannot miss strength if you have fellowship with the mighty Son of God.” Peter would add, “Put on the character of Christ in view of His coming soon. Paul concludes in Philippians 1: 10, “Approve what is excellent, and so be pure and blameless for the Day of Christ.” Let’s pray!