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## The Second Epistle of Peter

*Standing Firm on God's  
Promises Until Christ Comes  
(Pt 2)*

*July 16, 2017*

**Sermon Text:** Assorted

**Scripture Reading:** 2 Peter 3

We will start at the beginning next time and proceed through this second letter of the Apostle Peter, but I wanted to address a crucial subject this morning that Peter will ultimately take us to – namely, the issue of the Christian being on guard against loving this present world.

You have the warning stated by the Apostle John –

1 John 2:15-17 Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone

loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. (16) For all that is in the world—the desires of the flesh and the desires of the eyes and pride of life—is not from the Father but is from the world. (17) And the world is passing away along with its desires, but whoever does the will of God abides forever.

We have considered this subject many times before, but we can never be reminded of it too often. Last week I believe I alluded to it when I mentioned my thoughts as I consider our own home and property. We have lived there for nearly 20 years now. We tore down the old mobile home that was there, along with the old garage. We excavated a flat spot, poured a big concrete slab, put our present mobile home on it (along with all of the related work involved in such an undertaking). We built a storage shed, porches, a roof for the hot tub, and a bit later our garage. Then there is the landscaping and many other tasks that we put into the place.

So we stand back and we look at it and we think, “this is our home, just think of all the work we did” and so on. But then I can go out in our driveway and in one place where the gravel is missing, I can see concrete. It is the remnant of the concrete foundation of that old garage we tore down. And way in the back corner of our lot where you can’t see it there is a pile of big concrete chunks that we hauled back there which came from the foundation tie downs of the old mobile home. And there are other reminders – remnants – *that someone else used to live there*. I never met them. They probably lived there, developed the property much as we did, and perhaps were there 25 years or more.

Then the husband died, his widow put the place up for sale, we bought it, and I imagine she has died by now too.

Before that, the entire neighborhood was owned by a farmer and it was a pasture.

And every single one of these owners would tell you that they “own” the property. That it is part of their home, while they lived there. But the day came when it was no longer theirs. Someone else came along, and eventually *there is no memory left of the people who went before us*. And so it will be with us. Eventually, if the

Lord delays His return, *we will become part of history, a kind of archaeological dig even, and people will wonder “who were these people?”*

This world is perishing. It is passing away. The Lord tells us that anyone to loves it, anyone who sets their affections upon it as if it were their real, lasting, eternal residence, is a fool.

Luke 12:13-21 Someone in the crowd said to him, "Teacher, tell my brother to divide the inheritance with me." (14) But he said to him, "Man, who made me a judge or arbitrator over you?" (15) And he said to them, "Take care, and be on your guard against all covetousness, for one's life does not consist in the abundance of his possessions."

(16) And he told them a parable, saying, "The land of a rich man produced plentifully, (17) and he thought to himself, 'What shall I do, for I have nowhere to store my crops?' (18) And he said, 'I will do this: I will tear down my barns and build larger ones, and there I will store all my grain and my goods. (19) And I will say to my soul, "Soul, you have ample goods laid up for many years; relax, eat, drink, be merry.'"

(20) But God said to him, 'Fool! This

night your soul is required of you, and the things you have prepared, whose will they be?' (21) So is the one who lays up treasure for himself and is not rich toward God."

You see, the tendency that we must all be watching for in our thinking is that *this world, our house, our property, is ours, will always be ours, and is the object of our life's affections.*

Now, there is nothing wrong with loving "home." It is a good thing to have fond memories of the house we grew up in as kids, or of the house where our mom and dad or our grandparents lived, and all the Christmases and 4<sup>th</sup> of July picnics we enjoyed there. But the warning of Scripture is that *we must not give our ultimate affections to these things or to anything in this present world. Because the day is going to come when those things are gone.*

I can get on my motorcycle and I can cruise through West Salem, South Salem, Amity/Perrydale, Kings Valley, Monmouth, Independence, and I can ride by the houses and farms where I spent so much time as a kid. Many, many memories. But after 50 years or so has gone by, those places are either gone, or there are people living in them that I do not know, and most all of the family members I knew who lived there are dead. Gone. And in

many cases as far as the community goes, forgotten.

Listen to it again:

1 John 2:15-17 Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. (16) For all that is in the world—the desires of the flesh and the desires of the eyes and pride of life—is not from the Father but is from the world. (17) And the world is passing away along with its desires, but whoever does the will of God abides forever.

Little wonder then that Paul tells us:

Philippians 3:20-21 But our citizenship is in heaven, and from it we await a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, (21) who will transform our lowly body to be like his glorious body, by the power that enables him even to subject all things to himself.

Colossians 3:1-4 If then you have been raised with Christ, seek the things that are above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. (2) Set your minds on things that are above, not on things that are on earth. (3) For you have died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God. (4) When Christ who is your life appears, then you also will appear with him in glory.

So what does all this have to do with 2 Peter? We read it last week. Here it is again –

2 Peter 3:1-13 This is now the second letter that I am writing to you, beloved. In both of them I am stirring up your sincere mind by way of reminder, (2) that you should remember the predictions of the holy prophets and the commandment of the Lord and Savior through your apostles, (3) knowing this first of all, that scoffers will come in the last days with scoffing, following their own sinful desires. (4) They will say, "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."

(5) For they deliberately overlook this fact, that the heavens existed long ago, and the earth was formed out of water and through water by the word of God, (6) and that by means of these the world that then existed was deluged with water and perished.

(7) But by the same word the heavens and earth that now exist are stored up for fire, being kept until the day of judgment and destruction of the ungodly. (8) But do not overlook this one fact, beloved, that with the Lord one day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day. (9) The

Lord is not slow to fulfill his promise as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing that any should perish, but that all should reach repentance. (10) But the day of the Lord will come like a thief, and then the heavens will pass away with a roar, and the heavenly bodies will be burned up and dissolved, and the earth and the works that are done on it will be exposed.

(11) Since all these things are thus to be dissolved, what sort of people ought you to be in lives of holiness and godliness, (12) waiting for and hastening the coming of the day of God, because of which the heavens will be set on fire and dissolved, and the heavenly bodies will melt as they burn! (13) **But according to his promise we are waiting for new heavens and a new earth in which righteousness dwells.**

Young people, once again – if Christ delays His return – the day is going to come when YOU are the one driving by the house you lived in, or the house your aunt and uncle or grandparents lived in, the places you spent so much time when you were growing up, and YOU will have the same experience as me. You will find it a bit unreal – seeing that place and almost seeing yourself and your friends and family sitting there or picking the apples or

telling hunting stories by the fireplace – but they will all be gone and most likely you will see strangers living there.

Enjoy them. But do not *love them with the ultimate allegiance of your heart as if these people and these things and places were the real purpose and object for your life.* They are perishing.

Other people live for their career. Once again, it is a good thing to work hard, to prepare for a career in some field you really enjoy. But the day is going to come when your career is over and if you have set the ultimate affection of your heart on that career, as if IT were your life, then like many people who retire, you may well die not long after retirement. The day will come when that workplace where you were known and where you achieved good things, where you went to work each week for so many years, is either gone or filled with people who don't even know you. I can experience that kind of thing by driving by the Multnomah County Sheriff's Office or the Gresham Police Department. No one is left there who knows anything about me or the officers I worked with. If I made that career the love of my life, the reason for my existence, then I would be in eternal trouble.

Abraham had the right understanding

of these things:

Hebrews 11:8-16 By faith Abraham obeyed when he was called to go out to a place that he was to receive as an inheritance. And he went out, not knowing where he was going. (9) By faith he went to live in the land of promise, as in a foreign land, living in tents with Isaac and Jacob, heirs with him of the same promise. (10) For he was looking forward to the city that has foundations, whose designer and builder is God. (11) By faith Sarah herself received power to conceive, even when she was past the age, since she considered him faithful who had promised. (12) Therefore from one man, and him as good as dead, were born descendants as many as the stars of heaven and as many as the innumerable grains of sand by the seashore. (13) These all died in faith, not having received the things promised, but having seen them and greeted them from afar, and having acknowledged that they were strangers and exiles on the earth. (14) For people who speak thus make it clear that they are seeking a homeland. (15) If they had been thinking of that land from which they had gone out, they would have had opportunity to return. (16) But as it is, they desire a better country, that is, a heavenly one. Therefore God is not ashamed to be called their God, for he has prepared for them a city.

We could have properly titled this sermon *“The Nomadic Life of the Christian in this World,”* or *“The Christian’s Pilgrimage,”* or *“Just Passing Through on my Way Home.”*

\Recently I have been watching some YouTube series made by people who bought a sailboat and set out sailing around the world. One series has been ongoing for over 7 years now. With the right thinking I suppose that could be an example of living in a tent instead of a house with a foundation, but so far most of the people’s attitude is, as one stated in the last episode I watched” *“No purpose, no destination.”*

And that is exactly how the majority of human beings today – at least in more affluent societies – are living. No purpose, no destination. Oh, perhaps a purpose of hedonistic, selfish indulgence and if they give any thought to an ultimate destination, well, they just squelch it or tell themselves some religious or philosophical lie they have chosen to embrace that gives them some happy ending.

Man’s life does indeed have a purpose:

Q. 1. *What is the chief end of man?*  
A. Man's chief end is to glorify God, and to enjoy him forever.

That is the purpose of EVERY human being’s life, whether they acknowledge it or not. It is the purpose for God bringing us into existence. To insist that I just want to have a carefree life sailing around the world, doing whatever I want to do, and to refuse to acknowledge God and give Him glory is the most certain way to incur His wrath and eternal condemnation. Which brings us to that business of “no destination.”

The truth is that every human being has an eternal destination, toward which we are moving closer and closer every second:

Matthew 25:31-46 "When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, then he will sit on his glorious throne. (32) Before him will be gathered all the nations, and he will separate people one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats. (33) And he will place the sheep on his right, but the goats on the left.

(34) Then the King will say to those on his right, 'Come, you who are blessed by my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. (35) For I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me,

(36) I was naked and you clothed me, I was sick and you visited me, I was in prison and you came to me.' (37) Then the righteous will answer him, saying, 'Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you drink? (38) And when did we see you a stranger and welcome you, or naked and clothe you? (39) And when did we see you sick or in prison and visit you?' (40) And the King will answer them, 'Truly, I say to you, as you did it to one of the least of these my brothers, you did it to me.'

(41) "Then he will say to those on his left, 'Depart from me, you cursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels. (42) For I was hungry and you gave me no food, I was thirsty and you gave me no drink, (43) I was a stranger and you did not welcome me, naked and you did not clothe me, sick and in prison and you did not visit me.' (44) Then they also will answer, saying, 'Lord, when did we see you hungry or thirsty or a stranger or naked or sick or in prison, and did not minister to you?' (45) Then he will answer them, saying, 'Truly, I say to you, as you did not do it to one of the least of these, you did not do it to me.' (46) **And these will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal life."**

And of course, that eternal life is our resurrection and life in the New Heavens and New Earth which is our true, final, and eternal home.

Many years ago I was talking with a lady who told me that even as a little girl what she wanted more than anything else was a house, a husband, children, a family, a home. Well, things did not turn out as she dreamed. In fact, things turned out quite badly – not at all as she imagined. And I saw how frustrated she was as she continued to try and try and try to get that family and home and happy life. Her affections, you see, were set upon things that are temporal, or things that may never be ours at all. To love this world and the things in it is akin to treasuring one of those bubbles that children blow. A few seconds at best, and pop, it's gone.

So be thankful for the good things the Lord gives us in this life to enjoy. But do not give the full and final affections to them as if they were your life, as if this present world was your life. It isn't. If you know Christ, your life is there, above, with Him, and that is where our sights must be set. Scarlett's father, Gerald O'Hara, was wrong-

**"The land is the only thing in the world worth working for, worth**

fighting for, worth dying for,  
because it's the only thing that  
lasts".....Gerald O'Hara, Gone With  
The Wind."