

“What Are You Waiting For?”—2 Peter 3:11-14

The text for this sermon, the theme of which is, “What Are You Waiting For?”, is 2 Peter 3:11-14 → *Since all these things are thus to be dissolved, what sort of people ought you to be in lives of holiness and godliness, 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! But according to His promise we are waiting for new heavens and a new earth in which righteousness dwells. Therefore, beloved, since you are waiting for these, be diligent to be found by Him without spot or blemish, and at peace.* This is the text.

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ Jesus:

Impatience is expressed many times by anger and frustration. I’ve heard it expressed in a sarcastic statement such as, “What are you waiting for . . . Christmas?” Actually, that is a very appropriate question to ask during the Advent season. During this season the church is preparing and waiting for the celebration of the birth of Jesus. However, we do so as we confess together in the words of the Nicene Creed, “and I look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come.” Not only do we prepare and wait for the celebration of Christmas during

this Advent season but we prepare and wait for what our text refers to as *the coming of the day of God*—Judgment Day—the 2nd Advent of Jesus.

While we are preparing to celebrate for Christ's first coming, Jesus is preparing for His 2nd Coming. Our text describes it in verse 12 as the Last Day upon *which the heavens will be set on fire and dissolved, and the heavenly bodies (i.e. the sun, moon, stars, etc.) will melt as they burn!* Wow! I guess you better not get too attached to your stuff . . . it's just gonna burn up on the Last Day anyway. However, when you confess those advent words which close the Nicene Creed—"and I look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come"—are you really that eager to see this world to come to an end?

It is easy to become so comfortable with this life that looking forward to its being completely destroyed can be met with mixed feelings. Maybe it's not so much stuff as it is relationships. "Oh, it'll be great to experience the 2nd Coming of Jesus . . . as long as He waits until I've lived a full life, enjoyed raising my children and can live to see my grand children." The other extreme is when Jesus can't come soon enough for you in the midst of suffering, unfulfilled expectations in life and/or despair over the evil direction of our world today. Interesting how self-centered such concerns about the Last Day can be even for Christians.

However, the focus of our text is life and relationships by faith, not

death and destruction in unbelief. While the world around us is destroyed human life is not. It endures forever before God . . . either in eternal bliss in heaven or eternal suffering in hell. The Christians in our text had their patience tried by the unbelievers around them who were *scoffing, following their own sinful desires, 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.”* (cf. 2 Peter 3:3-4)

While unbelievers view the delay of Christ’s 2nd Advent with despair in an effort to discredit Jesus and your faith, the Christian views it much differently. It is a reflection of God’s patience with sinners so that they can have an eternal relationship with Him in heaven, stated in 2 Peter 3:9 → *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.* The real question is: “What is Yahweh waiting for?” **For everyone to repent of their sins and trust in the atoning work of Jesus for forgiveness, new life and salvation!**

This puts a whole new purpose on waiting as His people, His church in this world. It has to do with sharing the Gospel of Jesus Christ with others. Verses 11-12 of our text say: *Since all these things are thus to be dissolved, what sort of people ought you to be **in lives of holiness and godliness**, waiting for **and hastening** the coming of the day of God.*

What does living *lives of holiness and godliness* have to do with

hastening the coming of the day of God? It has to do with living a Christ-focused life while *waiting for . . . the coming of the day of God.*

It is describing an activity of “show and tell.” You remember how it worked in school. You brought something to school to show your classmates and tell about it. Jesus put it this way in Matthew 5:16 → *Let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father Who is in heaven.* Living *lives of holiness and godliness* has to do with acting in obedience to Jesus’ teaching, thus acting in ways which are contrary to the world’s ways of acting. Such good works will be noticed by others and open up opportunities for telling about the Gospel of Jesus Christ and God’s patience as He waits for people to repent of their sins and trust in Jesus.

It seems rather natural for people to focus on “timing” when thinking about the Last Day. It could flow from the sinful idolatrous nature of human beings to be in control of that which rightly belongs in the control of God and requires simple faith on our part. Many schools of religious thought seem to obsess with trying to “figure out” the events and timing of Jesus’ return. Even His disciples were mis-focused on timing, wanting to know when the impending destruction would take place (cf. Matthew 24:3). Immediately before His ascension into heaven they asked Jesus if it was time *restore the kingdom to Israel?* He re-directed their focus on “timing” and their false understanding of His kingdom to living *lives of*

holiness and godliness as witnesses to a sinful world. He said to them in Acts 1:7-8 → It is not for you to know times or seasons that the Father has fixed by His own authority. But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be My witnesses . . . to the end of the earth.

We Christian are in a period of eager waiting according to verses 13 of our text: *According to His promise we are waiting for new heavens and a new earth in which righteousness dwells.* We “can’t wait” to live with new glorified physical bodies in the *new heavens and . . . new earth in which righteousness dwells!* Thus, the instruction of verse 14 of our text: *Therefore, beloved, since you are waiting for these, be diligent to be found by Him without spot or blemish, and at peace.* How can you be found spotless, blameless, and at peace with Him on the Last Day when you fall into sin so much of the time? What about those sins of which you aren’t even aware?

Cling by faith to the Person & Work of Jesus Christ **for you!** If we’re going to be *without spot or blemish, and at peace* with God it happens only by trusting in Jesus as the spotless Lamb of God (cf. 1 Peter 1:18-19; John 1:29). He was blameless in a life of obedience to God’s Law on your behalf. His perfect sacrifice for the punishment of your sin has brought you peace with God in the forgiveness of sins. What are you waiting for? He’s waiting for you constantly to come to Him in repentance, trusting in

His cleansing work for the forgiveness of your sins and living a new life **now!**

Our faith isn't just looking forward to Jesus' coming. It is also clinging to **what He did** in His Person & Work on our behalf so that we can look forward to the future—our eternal future—with joy and with peace! This *waiting* is not described as sitting around “twiddling our thumbs,” waiting for God to do something. The Holy Spirit moves us to be active during our *waiting* and empowers us to be witnesses for Jesus so that people can be prepared and ready by repentance and faith to meet Him as they hear our Gospel witness. We have been cleansed in the blood of Christ to serve Him while waiting expectantly for His coming. So . . . what are you waiting for? Amen.

The peace of God, which passes all understanding,
keep your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus. Amen.

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