

12/8/24 - 2 Peter 3:9-13 - "The Coming Day"

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Date: 08 December 2024

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- [0 : 0 0] The reading of scripture will be 2 Peter chapter 3 verses 9 to 13. 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.
- 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.
- 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 a new heavens and a new earth in which righteousness dwells. That is the word of the Lord. Praise be to God.
- All right, good morning everyone. Can you hear me okay? Are we good? Are we good? All right, good. Good morning, my name is Carmen, and I'm the executive pastor, elder here at Still Valley Church, and I'm so excited to be back up here on the platform to bring you God's word on the Lord's Day.
- [1 : 3 4] During this beautiful Advent season, by the way, a round of applause for all the decorations and everything. The team went through a lot of work. It's absolutely beautiful.
- So, however, now earlier this week though, my wife and I welcomed back Kinsley and Caden into our homes. Another round of applause.
- And so now with their return, my wife and I are now outnumbered by four toddlers to just the two of us. So, please pray for us.
- And talking about today, this sermon will actually be surrounding our preparedness for the coming day. And so, just like we were being prepared for with the kids, we're going to be talking about being prepared for today.
- So, however, while I was preparing for this week's sermon, I hit a wall, a writer's block, if you will. And like I do when I normally have any type of issues with making sense of anything, I go in prayer and I ask God for help.
- [2 : 4 4] Well, won't he do it? Yes, he will. Because that very night when we received Kinsley and Caden back into our home, inspiration came flying out of nowhere.
- Literally. It was dinner time and not unlike most nights, it was a bit chaotic, especially with the four toddlers now. And as we were preparing the kids around the table, I asked my wife to go into the basement to get the additional booster seat for Kaden to sit and eat dinner.
- Moments later, as I was plating the food and telling the kids to sit down and stop screaming and yelling and stop moving, that I heard Kristen scream.

A bone-chilling shriek came from the basement. And now, depending on who you talk to, she said I didn't respond fast enough. However, as soon as I thought I heard the shriek, I started running towards the basement, flung open the door, going down the stairs, and what comes flying at me?

A bat. Soaring straight at my face. It was fantastic. Kristen screamed. I screamed. The kids screamed. We all screamed.

[3 : 57] And there was no ice cream. It was great. It was fantastic. It was awesome. However, thank God for this church. Because over the last few years, we've had our own run-in with a few rodents here at SVC.

And after experiencing that here, I was prepared for that day at home. And I knew exactly what to do to get rid of this unclean flying rat from our house.

And I was able to do it actually that night. Used a fishing, fly fishing. Anyway. So this unclean animal came flying at my face. And we know it's unclean because Leviticus 11, 19 and Deuteronomy 14, 18 tells us it is.

So I did not want that thing in my house. But, yeah. So nevertheless, the kids now call me the Batman. And now, being prepared for that, I also started thinking about being prepared for the other things in life that a lot of us are told to be prepared for.

We're asked, are you ready for school? Are you ready to start a career? Are you ready for marriage? Are you ready for kids? More kids? Four kids? Are you ready to buy a home?

[5 : 23] Are you ready for retirement? You see, we prepare for this life. But what about our preparedness for the unexpected certainties?

In today's sermon I've titled, The Coming Day, we'll be going through 2 Peter 3 and Matthew 25. Verses 1 through 3.

To examine the unexpected timing of Christ's return by reviewing our Lord's long-suffering. And then we'll scrutinize our own spiritual preparedness with the intention of helping us prepare when we come face-to-face with the Almighty God.

And enter into the coming day of the Lord. Are you ready? Alright. Let us pray. Father God, most gracious and loving and all-spectacular God, we thank you for this day.

We thank you for this moment. May we thank you for the breath that is in our lungs. Father, please help us as we journey through today's sermon and journey through the rest of this life.

[6 : 31] To be prepared. To be able to listen and hear and know what your will is, Father. Open up our eyes.

Softening our hearts. And open our ears. We bring this to you in Jesus' name. Amen. Alright. So before we get into today's sermon, I want to take a moment to emphasize some of the things we discussed last week.

That just as the Jews are longing for and waiting for the installation of their king, we are shown that the hope and longing for those of us as believers in Christ not only recognize the first advent, but his second coming, where he will consummate his bride of believers, his kingdom.

This hope and longing for our bridegroom returns, or the bridegroom's return, ties us to the past and prepares us for the coming day of the Lord.

That during this time, we must recognize that our God is not done. That similar to the events leading up to the birth of Christ, we must continue to prepare ourselves faithfully and obediently to his laws and to the new covenant as believers.

[7 : 53] Even though we sometimes feel that God is far off and his timing, we may question, which leads me to ask, are you ready?

Now hopefully, you are prepared today at least, and you brought your Bibles. Because I'll be going back and forth between the two verses, the two passages today, between 2 Peter and Matthew.

So, go ahead and bookmark both of those, and that way you're able to follow along a little bit better. However, if you're not prepared, and you didn't bring your Bibles, there's a bunch of Bibles and chairs in front of you, around you, somewhere.

So, good luck trying to find one. So, let's look first at 2 Peter chapter 3, and begin part 1, which I've titled, The Days of His Long Suffering.

Is everyone ready? Okay. Looking at this passage, I want to give you a little context on what St. Peter is dealing with here.

[8 : 59] The portion of his letter is directly related to the very notion many Christians and non-Christians have. And if we look just before our primary text at verse 4, so take your finger, go up a little bit, or over, we see the question of, where is the promise of his coming?

For ever since the faithful fell asleep, all things are continuing as they were from the beginning of creation. This question came by a warning from St. Peter to his audience, which many agree are the Christians in Asia Minor, and is the second letter he wrote to them.

This warning was in response to the false teachings that threaten the Christians, whereas Peter reminds them of the predictions of the holy prophets and the commandments of the Lord through his apostles.

Isn't it something, though, that it was in approximately 30 to 35 years after Christ ascended into the heavens that this letter was written, and there were literally still apostles, real apostles, walking the face of this earth, and there was people who have heard about Jesus, and maybe even some of them seen the Christ, and still their desire and what they did was fueled by their sin.

And they began to already question whether or not Christ was even going to come back. 30, 35 years. It's like, almost me.

[10 : 37] A little over in 30, 35 years, but anyway. Having hindsight in the fact that we're still here 2,000 years later, it should not be any surprise that this question is still very prevalent to us today.

Peter responds to these scoffers and guides us and them by pointing out that they and we are deliberately overlooking the fact that the very heavens and the earth have existed for far longer than any of them and any of us.

That God is beyond and above everything we can sense, and through His word He creates and destroys as He did with the flood. That God is not confounded to a particular timeline since He is able to see the end from the beginning.

And that by His word He will bring about the day of the Lord. Now this day of the Lord, we're going to be talking about it, it's literally the glorification of His beloved, those who believe in Him, and the judgment and destruction of the ungodly and the unbelief.

In fact, we get very similar questions while Christ is actually still on earth. And then, if we flip back to Matthew 24, and leading up, that's leading up to our secondary text today, we'll see that Christ, in chapter 24, verse 3, come with me, Christ is approached by His disciples saying, tell us, when will these things be and what will be the sign of your coming in the end of the age?

[12 : 21] In Christ's response, as we went over last week, He provides this warning that false teachers claiming to be Christ leading many astray and signs to cultivate us towards a watchful and prayerful relationship with Him to prepare us for the birthing pains, the tribulations, the darkness when the stars from the sky fall while the heavens shake.

With these vividly vague descriptions, Christ points to the fact that no one besides the Father knows the day and the hour for the Son of Man to return.

Instead, Christ proclaims that you also must be ready for the Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect. Are you ready?

Now, going back to 2 Peter and looking at Peter's rebuttal, he further emphasizes Christ's words and responds to the scoffer's question pointing to God's sovereignty over time and that God's perspective on time differs radically than our own.

He expands upon this perceived delay of divine judgment in verse 9 where as Peter writes, the Lord is not slow to fulfill His promise as some count slowness, but is patient towards you, notwithstanding that any should perish, but that all should reach repentance.

[13 : 47] For both the recipients of Peter's letters and those of you listening to this sermon today should know that the God of Abraham, of Isaac, Jacob, that the Christ, that this Jesus has continually kept His word, His covenant, and His promises despite our unfaithfulness.

That His timing is one of a great mystery to us and being the author of time, He has bestowed upon us many mercies and grace as well as glimpses of His wrath. Throughout the age we have seen instances of His long suffering and the remarkable swiftness of His judgment.

Looking at only the beginning of time with Adam and Eve, we have, here we have the Almighty creating the world, a paradise on earth, the heavens and everything in between, excuse me, the consciousness and order out of nothing with only a word.

that our God from the very beginning has been let down. We have shown our wretchedness and disobedience. But instead of destroying all of creation, which would have been justified to do at that very moment, we read in Genesis chapter 3, verse 21, and the Lord God made for Adam and his wife garments of skin.

Thank you. I was not prepared. I was not prepared. Anyway, back up.

[15 : 27] So we're looking at Genesis chapter 3, verse 21, and read, and the Lord God made for him and his wife garments of skin and clothed them.

He clothed them despite despite their sin, despite their transgression. He provided.

We continue to read of man's continued rebellion against his law and the wickedness, the lies, the schemes, the murders, the sexual immorality, the idolatry, all and absolute affront to our God.

And yet, through his long suffering and patience with us, he continues to call. He continues to show grace, mercy, and love.

He calls out to the transgressors, the sinners, the lost at sea, thrashing from one fatal wave of sin to another. He sends refuge to the weak and unstable.

[16 : 32] He sends manna to the hungry, living water to the thirsty. He sends wisdom for the poor in spirit through his law, his prophets, and his son. But still, we wade deep into the cold abyss of sin.

Although we deserve nothing but the Lord's anger and hatred, he declares, I will heal their apostasy. I will love them freely.

From Hosea chapter 14 verse 4. For our God is a loving God and he cannot deny himself. He knows and loves those who are his and he will not forsake us and will not allow any of his elect to perish but instead he so loved the world that he gave his only begotten son.

So that son can plunge into the tempest world of depravity to breathe life into the believers and resuscitating our souls and opening our eyes. We can see the light and turn away from the deep cold abyss of death towards everlasting life.

That even though it sometimes feels like we're all alone and cast out at sea and as time passes, we're further and further away from the promised land, beaten by the waves and given way to the wings full of ungodly desires.

[18 : 03] That in our darkest hour of the night consumed with doubt, bitterness, and terrified, we cry out in fear to the ghastly things of this world.

He is there. Calling us and proclaiming, take heart, it is I, do not be afraid. It is then when he comes into our lives, he commands us to follow him, to join him in the holiest of covenants, to be his bride, to not look back and leave behind the coffin-sized battered boat that every cell in our being, our hearts, our minds, our souls, are completely and forever unchanged.

That even though during our walk towards him, through the storm, we may stumble, we may see and give way to the corrupt winds and waves crashing around us, and as we begin to sink, he is there.

That if only we cry out in repentance, Lord, save me, he is there and he will answer and say, here am I. And immediately reach out his hand in forgiveness and take a hold of us, heal us, comfort us, wrap us in his righteousness and never let us go.

Countless times this has occurred since the fall of man because our long-suffering God is patient, he is loving, and he is there for us. Where is our faith?

[19 : 40] Why do we doubt? Where is your faith? Cast aside your iniquities, turn away from the distractions, the noise, the sin, and focus on him, church.

We must continue to look upon him, his word, his cross, and follow the will of the Father. His Holy Spirit is through him alone that we will have the strength to carry on and live reunited with him.

or do you not even think about him, nor see the things your God has done? Christian, Christ was born and slain for you.

Continue to pray for deliverance from the devil's temptations, the sinful natures of this world, and your wicked heart. Because as much love and grace our long-suffering God has for us, there is also a holy wrath stored up in the heavens for the Lord, whose name is a jealous God.

And the day of his long-suffering will end, and the unexpected coming day of the Lord is near. Are you ready? You see, church, the day of the Lord will come, and the time to delay will eventually be over.

[21 : 12] The time for preparation will end, and with it, and we shouldn't presume on the kindness and patience of our God.

So looking ahead in part two of today's sermon that I've titled The Coming Day of the Lord, and in the following verses, Peter, like Christ in Matthew 24, starts to point a picture of what the days leading up to Christ's return in our final judgment will look like.

Let's read in verse 10 in 2 Peter. 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 burnt up and dissolved, and the earth and the works that are done on it will be exposed.

first. These very verses are reminiscent of Christ's words in Matthew 24 verses, verse 43, whereas Christ also portrays his return like a thief in the night.

And upon his arrival, the skies, our heavens, will be destroyed with a thunderous roar, and everything above them, the stars, the planet, the moon, the sun, the entire cosmos, referred here as the heavenly bodies will be burnt up and dissolved.

[22 : 32] And everything that we see, everything that we know, everything that has been done on this earth will be exposed for what it really and truly is.

So what say you, Christian? Are you ready? Does the day of his return, his judgment, strike fear into the depths of your being? Does it cause you to pause and ask yourself, are you actually ready or prepared for his return?

For Christ has already told us in John chapter 14 verses 1 through 3, let not your hearts be troubled. Believe in God.

Believe also in me. In my Father's house are many rooms. If it were not so, would I have told you that I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and will take you to myself, that where I am, you may be also.

Because we must remember he is our bridegroom and we belong to him. So we must ask ourselves, if the Lord of hosts has gone through such great lengths to be brought into this world to save us, die for us, rise again, and ascend into heaven to prepare for us, as we see in verse 13, a new heaven and a new earth, a new home to bless and invite his bride to the marriage supper of the Lamb, then what if his Holy Spirit's residence in us now?

[24 : 14] Remember, God is not done, and since the days of Pentecost, his spirit has come down and dwelled the hearts, the minds, and the souls of his believers. He is here.

Let's think about this for a moment. And now, I know, I'm sure a majority of us have either been to a friend's house or been as guests to someone else's house, and you can recall certain instances where when you arrive, it's fantastic, where you felt the warmth, the love, and the earnest desire of your host to make sure you felt welcomed.

They may prepare for us a delicious meal, serve refreshments. The table might be ornate with china, fine china and silverware. They graciously ask if there's anything else we need or that we want.

The time spent there in fellowship is so peaceful, relaxing, and joyful that you don't want to leave. Then there are other times when it's the exact opposite, where something just doesn't feel right, and you can't wait to get back home.

So we must honestly ask ourselves, is his Holy Spirit welcomed in you? are you persisting in your love for Christ and continually preparing your hearts and lives for the unexpected timing of his return?

[25 : 54] Or are you in your short term zeal for Christ serving the best wine to anything and anyone else that garnishes your attention instead of reserving it for your true love?

life? These questions, of course, are inspired from John 2 during the wedding at Cana, where Christ's first sign turning water into wine was observed.

Weddings, just like in our culture today, we have a few coming up, were highly anticipated and magnificent occasions for the ancient Jews.

so much so, Christ uses the wedding feast in the parable of the ten virgins in Matthew chapter 25 to distinguish the wise and the foolish in the wait for Christ's return.

Let's turn there now. Are you ready? I think some heads shake up and down.

[27 : 00] Okay. A few things to note while we go over this parable. It was normal for Jewish customs during a wedding for it to begin at the bride's house and then the bridegroom would join them to observe the wedding rituals.

Then a procession would follow as the bridegroom took his bride to his house for the completion of the festivities. For a night wedding, a lamp would be needed during the procession to light the way to the bridegroom's home and ward off any intruders or help identify anyone else who was trying to crash the party.

Therefore, when we look at this parable, we see the ten virgins waiting for the bridegroom to arrive. The ten virgins in this parable represent those who call themselves believers.

it is here that we see five of them who are wise and five, five of them who are wise and prepared by taking oil for their lamps to light their journey back to the bridegroom's home and five that do not.

Now, why did the five foolish virgins go unprepared? We're not told explicitly, but we can infer that these virgins, these Christians did have the appearance of being ready.

[28 : 24] They brought their lamps, they partook in the festivities while they were at the bride's home, but they failed to ensure that the oil that was required to make the journey to the bridegroom's home was preserved.

It's a glaring portrayal of many self-proclaimed believers that look and act like a Christian when it's convenient and fun for them. When times are good and there's a celebration to be had.

But what happens when the journey gets dark? When there are intruders and imposters afoot? They have been exposed for what they really are, and these virgins can no longer rely on themselves and the perceptions they portrayed because they are completely empty.

They weren't ready for the bridegroom's return. Are you ready? We read on later that while the virgins awaited their bridegroom, a long time had passed.

So long that they fell asleep. You see, church, our hope and yearning for his return may be imminent as described in Matthew 24, or longer than we expected as we see here.

[29 : 44] But we must endure. We must remain vigilant. We must be prepared. You notice that all of the virgins fell asleep, the wise and the foolish.

But it was the wise that kept hold of their oil. Reading this, some may consider the wise virgins' tiredness as only falling away from their faith.

I think it also paints a different picture. I think it showcases our dependency and frailty in this world. That even though we're still here, we must continue on in this life, whether it be our roles as parents, brothers, sisters, fathers, husbands, mothers, citizens, sinners, sinners, of this earth.

All the while holding fast the source of light, grace, and salvation given to us by the Almighty. Now even though we must participate in this world, we shouldn't be of this world.

So when the time comes and the announcement of our bridegroom's return is nigh, we are prepared to meet him. Are you ready? Because when the day of the Lord is upon us, no matter how much others beg, we cannot save them.

[31 : 09] We can't give them, nor can any price be paid, nor work be done by them to receive the oil that lights the flame for our salvation. Only Christ can do that.

And there will be no second chance. The days of his long suffering will be over. And he will answer to those begging to be let in by saying, I do not know you.

As we read in verse 12. Church, don't leave today without knowing that you will be judged.

The wicked condemned to endless punishment and those clothed in the righteousness of Christ to endless joy. That this judgment is fixed.

Forever as the final state of men in heaven or hell. On the principles of God's righteousness. Are you ready?

[32 : 17] You see, church, there are two ways you're going to come face to face with the Lord of hosts, the King of kings, and the Lord of lords. And if you're sitting here today listening or online, and you have tuned out most of what I'm saying and setting before you, and believe that his return in the day of the Lord is far off, then, as we conclude today's sermon, I ask both the believer and the non-believer this, are you prepared to die?

You do realize that whenever death comes, it will be too late to prepare for it. The ship must be rigged in the harbor, for it is too late to do it in the midst of a storm out on the ocean.

You can delightfully spend your days without Christ and grace, but when the bridegroom comes by death, you will, as the foolish virgins, seek oil because your lamps have gone out.

And it will be too late. Only those who are ready will enter with him. Neither death nor Christ will wait for any man to prepare his heart with grace.

He must do it before death comes, or else he can never do it. If our spiritual change does not occur before our death or his return, we will be unchangeably miserable.

[33 : 51] Everyone listening to this now, there is no doubt that although you live as a slave to sin and Satan, you will want to die as the Lord's freeman. However, God warns that if you live in bondage to your lusts and your idolatry, there will be no liberty for you when you die.

You must give attention to your soul and ensure your salvation is right now. If not then, when? Let your reason judge carefully.

Do you really think it would be better time to prepare for your soul for the marriage, feast of the Lamb, the dark night of death? What could you possibly hope to do in that dismal hour?

Let this notion also guide our relationships and our part of the Great Commission because faith comes by hearing and hearing by the Word of God.

Let's think about how terrible it would be, wives, if you woke up tomorrow morning to find your husband dead lying next to you. Fathers and mothers, if your child was killed, brothers and sisters, if another sibling was murdered, children, if your parents were to succumb to their sickness, all of which would bring an insurmountable amount of grief and pain and agony.

[35 : 27] How much more if they weren't in Christ and they never bent the knee to Him as King? Amen. So I pray as we gather with our friends and family this Christmas season that we not only take inventory of our own souls but are bold and winsome to others because they are on a path with a long, suffering, and vengeful God swelling with holy wrath for His enemies above them.

surrounded by brimstone of sinful desires to the left and right of them, a lake of fire below, all the while running towards the devil's open arms and eternal torment.

As long as we have breath in our lungs, we must take heed to God's call as written in Ezekiel 33, 11 to turn back, turn back from your evil ways for why will you die, O house of Israel?

Because despite our constant rebellion, our almighty God has provided us a way. So come, though you have nothing but your sins, come, He is the offering, come, see what your God has done.

or will you be caught off guard and terrified in the coming days of either your death or His return and seek refuge from the divine wrath by hiding in the holes in the ground in caves as described in Isaiah chapter 2.

[37 : 12] As they did in verse 20, in that day, mankind will cast away their idols of silver and their idols of gold which they made for themselves to worship to the moles and to the bats.

Are you ready, church? Are you prepared? If anyone is here today who isn't ready to say and can't really say whether or not they have that great assurance of knowing that they're in Christ, I pray that you come and you talk to any of the pastors.

We would love to talk to you. Don't let another moment go away. Don't let another breath escape your lungs without going and bending the knee to the Almighty.

Let us pray.