

BE READY : THE END IS ONLY THE BEGINNING!

JULY 18, 2021

WORSHIP

Prepare the Way of the Lord, In Christ Alone, Christ be Magnified

WELCOME

What emoticon or hashtag will you use to describe how you feel about the end times? Why?

WORD

2 PETER 3:10-13

¹⁰ But according to His promise we are looking for new heavens and a new earth, in which righteousness dwells.

¹¹ Since all these things are to be destroyed in this way, what sort of people ought you to be in holy conduct and godliness, ¹² looking for and hastening the coming of the day of God, because of which the heavens will be destroyed by burning, and the elements will melt with intense heat!

¹³ But according to His promise we are looking for new heavens and a new earth, in which righteousness dwells.

(READ 2 PETER 3 AHEAD OF TIME)

Why should we study the end times, or what will happen in the future? You and I are created for eternity, the question is what will that eternity be like and where will we spend it? This is a decision that we need to make on our time on earth, and the way we decide it will have eternal consequences (**Daniel 12:2**). Here are three principles on how to be ready for the end times:

1. BELIEVE GOD'S PROMISE

2 Peter 3:1-2 begins by Peter giving a wakeup call to the early believers who were subject to persecution and a lot of pressure. Many must've been discouraged and disillusioned, maybe even doubting their faith. The apostle Peter reminds them that though they didn't know when, Jesus is certainly coming again (**Daniel 7:13-14; Matthew 24:42,44**).

Now, being ready is not just a nice idea, but a command. We shouldn't just believe it in the head, but it has to be a heart conviction that impacts our daily life. Does Jesus Christ's promised return impact your daily living? Jesus' himself left a reminder about his return in **Acts 1:10-11**, and Peter similarly reminds us not to lose sight because indeed, Jesus could come today or tomorrow (**2 Peter 1:12-15**). Peter, knowing that he didn't have much time left on earth, made it his highest priority to remind the believers to persevere and hold on to their faith because Jesus is coming again.

You may be having doubts about your future, experiencing depression, going through pain, or temptations that have you thinking that maybe the Christian life is not worth living. Peter warns us in **2 Peter 3:3-4** that in the last days mockers will come to make the believers question the coming of Jesus. But the truth to their agenda is that they only desire to follow their lusts. If people convince themselves that Jesus is not coming then they won't believe in a day of judgment and reckoning, and they can do as they please without being accountable. Peter tells us not to align ourselves with such people, and he also warns these mockers that God's word is both powerful as when he spoke the earth into being during creation, and reliable as when he brought about judgment during Noah's time; bringing about the floods when the people least expected it (**vv.5-6**). The Bible tells us that everything in creation will be destroyed by fire (**v7**), and if we don't guard our hearts, we might begin to live lukewarm or compromised Christian lives. We need to have a genuine conviction of Christ's return so that it impacts our day-to-day living (**1 John 2:15-17**).

2. RESPOND TO GOD'S PATIENCE

2 Peter 3:8-9 says that God is not constrained by time because He is from everlasting to everlasting. Here, the apostle Peter tells us that God is not slow in keeping His promise; He is being patient with us, waiting for all to come to repentance! Respond to God's patience through repentance which is not just a change of mind, but a change in the inner person that leads to life

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change. This can only happen when a person surrenders his life completely to Jesus as his Lord and Savior.

The day of the Lord is likened to a thief (**2 Peter 3:10**). A thief will never make an advanced appointment and will never knock on your door. Jesus himself warned us to be ready because he will come when we least expect it (**Matthew 24:44**). Even in the Old Testament, we are repeatedly taught to understand that the full implication of Jesus' return will not just be a happy reunion, but he will return as a coming Judge who will decisively judge this world of sin once and for all (**Malachi 4:1**). Though this may not be our ultimate destiny as followers of Christ because of our salvation through Jesus Christ, this should kindle a reverent fear of God in our hearts (**Romans 14:10-12**). What does it mean to respond to God's patience? It means to commit/re-commit your life to Jesus as your Lord, Master, and Savior. God is patient, and we need to respond to that patience today because Jesus is coming soon!

3. LIVE FOR GOD'S PLEASURE

Peter also tells believers that this world will be destroyed, and we should live our lives in holy conduct and godliness. Our thoughts, motives, the decisions we make, the way we handle money, our family relationships, the way we do business—all of these things should be done for God's pleasure, his glory, and for his honor. The word "godliness" here means "good worship". It means that the way we live our lives should be a way of constant day by day, moment by moment worship (**Romans 12:1**). Though the end times will be a fearsome time, if you are child of God, you can look for and hasten the coming of Jesus. For us, the end will only be the beginning of an eternity with God! Today, we have the golden opportunity to share Christ to those around us (**Matthew 24:14**). **2 Peter 3:13-14; 17-18** warns us that there will be unprincipled men in the last days, but we are to be steadfast, growing in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

2 Peter 3:13 and **1 Corinthians 2:9** gives the promise us of new heavens and a new earth with its indescribable beauty! Jesus promised his disciples that he would come back for them (**John 14:2-3**), and the glimpse of this promise is described in **Revelation 21:1-4**. If you have given your life to Jesus, heaven is where you will spend eternity! A place where there will be no more death, mourning, crying, or pain. All God's people will be there, and God himself will be there. We will be in the glorious presence of Jesus Christ for the rest of eternity. Are we ready for Christ's return? Be ready! The end is truly only the beginning!

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

(Leaders: Please choose questions that are appropriate to the level of spiritual maturity of your members)

1. Self-Check.

Do you really believe in the promised return of the Lord Jesus Christ? How does your answer impact your daily life?

2. Setting It Right

In what way can you best respond to the patience of God?

3. Living It Out

What do you need to stop, start or improve in your life in order to live for God's pleasure?

WORKS

PRAY CARE SHARE IN ACTION

Pray for a deep conviction about Jesus Christ's promised return among your family, friends, co-workers. Maximize your time on earth as a witness to them. Keep sharing the gospel as we await the return of our King!

WEEKLY PRAYER POINTS

I. Thanksgiving

Worship God for who He is, what He has done, and what He will do in our lives

II. Country and the World

Upright and moral governance of Public Servants
A God-centered Philippines
Repentance and Salvation

III. Church

That CCF Members would honor and love God and make disciples
Elders, Pastors, Leaders, and Families
Ministries and Churches worldwide

IV. CCF Facilities

Worship and Training Center
Prayer Mountain

V. Personal Concerns

Deeper intimate relationship with God
Righteous living
Salvation of family and friends



But according to His promise we are looking for new heavens and new earth, in which righteousness dwells.

2 Peter 3:13