

HIS GREAT RETURN

Key Verse: 2 Peter 3:1-9

Key Thought: Jesus is Coming Back

- Written Ad 65 and 68
- Theme of 2 Peter- Peter teaches believers awaiting the Lords return how God equips them to deal with false teachers and evildoers who have come to church

2 Peter 3:1-9

Dear friends, this is now my second letter to you. I have written both of them as reminders to stimulate you to wholesome thinking. I want you to recall the words spoken in the past by the holy prophets and the command given by our Lord and Savior through your apostles.

Above all, you must understand that in the last days scoffers will come, scoffing and following their own evil desires. They will say, “Where is this ‘coming’ he promised? Ever since our ancestors died, everything goes on as it has since the beginning of creation.”

But they deliberately forget that long ago by God’s word the heavens came into being and the earth was formed out of water and by water. By these waters also the world of that time was deluged and destroyed. By the same word the present heavens and earth are reserved for fire, being kept for the day of judgment and destruction of the ungodly.

But do not forget this one thing, dear friends: With the Lord a day is like a thousand years, and a thousand years are like a day. The Lord is not slow in keeping his promise, as some understand slowness.

Instead, He is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance.

In 1942, General Douglas MacArthur was forced to leave the Philippines before the Japanese conquered the islands. As he left, he gave the Filipino people this promise; "I will return!" Though many doubted whether MacArthur would be able to keep his promise, in the fall of 1944 he did return. He returned in power and defeated the Japanese army, retaking the Philippines just as he said he would. Many had doubted the great General, but he was true to his word.

2,000 years ago, a man named Jesus Christ walked upon this earth. He was different from any man who ever lived before or has lived since. He was different because He was God in the flesh. He came to this world to live a perfect life and to die a perfect death to make a sinful people perfect and to give them eternal life. After He died and rose again, He returned to His Father. Before He left, however, He made this great promise; "*I will come again!*" (*John 14:3*) Many doubted the truth of His promise then and many doubt it today. Perhaps there are some under the sound of my voice that do not believe that He will really come again? If there is a doubt in your mind as to His Great return, then this is the message for you. Peter had to deal with a doubting crowd. In these verses, he handles their objections and provides genuine hope for all those that believe Jesus will really come again.

Today, I want to ask, and answer this question; "Will Jesus Really Come Again?" As I do, I want you to ask, and answer this question for yourself; "Am I ready for that event?"

I. HIS COMING IS DOUBTED

In 2 Peter, Peter sheds some light on the nature of the doubters.

- a) **Their Character** – They are called Scoffers – "To mock, to ridicule, to make fun of." These people delight in making fun of the Word of God. Every pronouncement of God is just fuel for another joke.

- b) **Their Conduct** – These people made light of God's coming judgment, because to acknowledge the truth of it would mean that they would have to change their lifestyles. It has always played out this exact way – People in Noah's day – People of Sodom and even People in our day! Men and Women love their sin too much to turn their lives over to the Lord. If only they could see the truth concerning the nature of their sin and how it will affect their future!

- c) **Their Complaint** – They look back over the few years of their memories and conclude that He hasn't returned, therefore there is no reason to believe He will. Many preachers since Apostle Paul have preached the nearness of His return. He hasn't so does that mean we are all wrong? Society would answer "Yes!" but the Bible says something far different.

II. HIS COMING IS DETERMINED

Peter reminds us that the critics are "willingly ignorant." In other words, they refuse to process some very important data. They have a very limited vision and fail to remember that God, not them, is in control of the universe. Since He is in control, He can break into time anytime He chooses and can do as He pleases!

The critic also forgets that God is bound by His Word, and that He will always do exactly what He says – Psalms 119:89; Matthew 5:18.

The return of Christ hangs totally on the Word of God. It is the only witness we have, and it is the only one we need!

Peter gives three instances when God did indeed step into time and change the world. It's important to note that all three of these events are products of His Word.

- a) **The Formation Of The World** –
(Genesis 1:1) – "And God said..." – used 9 times!

- b) **The Flood of Noah's Day** –
(Genesis 6:6-7; Genesis 7:17) – The scoffers in Noah's day said it would never happen, but it did anyway! The Lord had spoken!

- c) **The Fire Still To Come** – A day is coming when by His Word, God will destroy the world! The scoffers laugh, but it will happen! God already has the combustible materials in place.

- i) **Oxygen** - Oxygen is required for all combustion. It is what fire feeds on. Take away the oxygen and the fire dies, turn it on and the fire flares. Yet, with every breath, we pull this highly explosive material into our bodies.

- ii) **Nitrogen** – Nitrogen is the component that makes dynamite, TNT and nitroglycerin explosive. Yet, every day we gulp massive quantities of nitrogen in the air that we breath. Cannot the same God who made these elements and combined them in such a way that they do not explode, also change the mixture, and cause them to explode? Of course, He can!

- iii) **Table Salt** - It is 1/3 Sodium. Sodium by itself is a gray, putty like substance. It must be kept in kerosene, or it will explode. If a drop is placed in water, it will result in a violent fire. Yet, we eat it every day!

- iv) **Water** – It is composed of Oxygen and Hydrogen. Both are extremely explosive yet combined in a manner that makes them safe. All God must do is speak the Word and the chemical arrangement is altered and the world becomes a huge fuel dump. Yet, we drink this life-giving substance every day.

- v) **The Atom** – When the atom is split, a change reaction is set in motion that has the power to level cities and vaporize men. Yet, we are all made up of atoms.

- vi) ***The Earth*** – The earth has been compared to a rounded egg with a hard crust covering a semi-liquid center. In scale, the earth’s crust is the same thickness of an egg’s shell when compared to the vast sea of lava under it. There have been times when this lava has burst forth and killed thousands. Yet, we walk on this thin crust every day and trust in the safety of the earth.

God has everything in place to carry out His word as He has said.

The return of Christ is a certain event. We have God’s Word on it:

1. Jesus – John 14:1-3; Revelation 22:20
2. Angels – Acts 1:10-11
3. Paul – 1 Thessalonians 4:16-18
4. John – Revelation 1:7

The mockers, scoffers and other fools can have their laugh, but God will keep His promise. Jesus is coming! Peter’s whole point is this: Man willfully ignores the truth so that he can continue to live in sin and mockery of Almighty God.

III. HIS COMING IS DELAYED

- a) **A Reality To Consider** - God doesn’t view time as man does. God is totally unaffected by time. By His accounting, Jesus has not even been gone 2 days yet. The world is only 6 days old. We must never **time God by our watch**. He is rarely early, but He is never late!

b) **A Reminder To Consider** – God is not dragging His feet. We are often called slackers when we don't operate on another man's schedule. However, God answers to no one! God is a God of order. If you don't believe me, just look at the universe. It is a model of precision and speaks of a precise, orderly God. He has a purpose in everything He does, even in what men call a delay.

c) **A Reason To Consider** – Why does God delay His return? He tarries to give the lost men and women an opportunity to make things right with Him. God doesn't want anyone to go to Hell – Matthew 25:41. This very reason is why:

1. He sent Jesus to die – John 3:16

2. He calls men to Himself – John 6:44

3. He tarries His coming and delays His judgment – 1 Tim. 2:4

The final decision, however, lays on your shoulders. To come to Christ, you must be willing to make room for Jesus by repenting of your sins and receiving Him into your life. God had gone as far as He will, now He waits for you to come to Him!

4. God's delay gives you and I, the opportunity to repent. Will you do it? He will not wait forever – Genesis 6:3. He waited 120 years then, but today is your day –
2 Corinthians 6:2

To close, I want you to know that *it is indeed a fact!* Christ is coming! He is returning for a people who are ready to meet Him. He delays His return today because He loves you and doesn't want you to die lost. He tarries to give you an opportunity to repent and to turn to Him. This is an offer based totally in His love. Are you ready you receive it?

The world can scoff, and they can mock, but when He comes, the bottom line is this: Will you be taken in the rapture, or will you be found lost, judged, and sentenced to Hell? God has already made His decision. He loves you and has made a way for you to be saved. Now, you make your decision. What will it be, Heaven or Hell? What will you do with Jesus?

Place: FCA

Date: Sunday, December 11, 2022

Time: 10:30am

After Service Song: O Come to the Altar