

“A Reason for Thanks-Giving: Christ is Coming Back”

2Peter 3:1-10

Read **2Peter 3:1-2...** Peter reminds his audience that this is his second letter to those who are loved by God through Christ (see **Jude 1-2**). Peter seeks to stir up the believers by reminding them of what the prophets have already said.

Peter has been warning the believers about false teachers, and he clearly doesn't want them to become complacent and apathetic about this, so he is urging them to be sober minded, alert, and proactive, against these false shepherds, as Jesus also warned (**Matthew 7:15**), “Beware of the false prophets, who come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly are ravenous wolves.”

Peter uses repetition to reiterated the spiritual truths and precepts given by God, so that His people are forewarned and prepared to expose and rebuke false teachings.

The Old Testament repeatedly speaks of God's judgment upon false prophets, false teachers, hypocrites and heretics (see **Jude 3-4, 14-16**).

The men who spoke and wrote the very words of God, the prophets in the Old Testament, and the Apostles in the New Testament, received the commandment of the Lord and proclaimed it to the church (see **1Timothy 6:13-16**).

The commandment of the Lord isn't one specific commandment, but all that is revealed to us in the Scriptures (often referred to as Scripture, or the Word of God; see **2Timothy 3:16; 4:1-5**).

Read **2Peter 3:3-4...** False teachers in Peter's day, as well as today, ridicule believers for trusting what the Bible says about creation, and also about God's judgment upon the godless world at the time of Noah. And so, Peter warns his readers that these men are purposeful in denying the return of Christ and long awaited condemnation of these false prophets, false teachers, hypocrites and heretics who seek to undermine the faith and belief we have in Christ's return.

False teachers *follow after* their own carnal lusts, i.e., their lifestyles are dominated by immorality. They do not want a holy God to return and render judgment upon them, for they know their teachings are false, and they are guilty.

False teachers reject Christ's Return, just as they reject the thought of any future retribution for their godlessness; but then, they are mockers who come mocking the plan, purpose and provision of God.

Read **2Peter 3:5-6...** False teachers make the claim that everything has continued just as it was from the very beginning of creation, and there will not be a return of Christ. They say God created everything then He walked away from it, and so, they teach that we live in a world of cause and effect, without any divine intervention. This view is known as uniformitarianism and it opposes a six-day creation, a global flood, and any interaction between God and His creation once it was completed.

November 21st, 2021

“A Reason for Thanks-Giving: Christ is Coming Back”

2Peter 3:1-10

Peter says (**2Peter 3:5**) that, what should be clear to these false teachers concerning the existence and authority of God, “escapes their notice,” that phrase means that they willingly ignore the truth of God in creation and so damn themselves (see **Romans 1:18-20**).

Christians see God as the Creator, Sustainer, and Judge overall, who has ordained the natural operation of the universe and everything it, while also intervening in creation whenever He wills to do so; and therefore, believers have always longed for the Lord’s return, so as to be joined with Him and to see His kingdom established on earth.

God promises that He is coming back for us, His Word is full of such promises; in fact, out of the 27 New Testament Books, 25 of them speak of the Lord’s Return. Note: Nathan Busenitz, a professor at the Master’s Seminary, says it very cogently: “The hope of Christ’s coming was of paramount importance for the early church. In fact, its certainty was so real that first-century believers would greet one another with the term ‘maranatha,’ meaning ‘Lord. come quickly.’ Instead of being frightened by the possibility, they clung to it as the culmination of everything that believed. Not surprisingly, the New Testament reflects this intense anticipation by referencing Jesus’ return, whether directly or indirectly, in every New Testament book except Philemon and 3John.”

It is our faith in God’s Word, God’s Son, that saves us, now and forever **Hebrews 11:1-3**, “Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen. For by it the men of old gained approval. By faith we understand that the worlds were prepared by the word of God, so that what is seen was not made out of things which are visible.” **6**, “And without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is and that He is a rewarder of those who seek Him.”

Ephesians 2:8a, “For by grace you have been saved through faith.”

Romans 10:17, “So faith comes from hearing, and hearing by the word of Christ.”

1Corinthians 15:1-5, “Now I make known to you, brethren, the gospel which I preached to you, which also you received, in which also you stand, by which also you are saved, if you hold fast the word which I preached to you, unless you believed in vain. For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received, that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, and that He was buried, and that He was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures, and that He appeared to [Peter], then to the twelve. ”

Christians believe all that the Bible declares, because our faith is in the omnipotent, omniscient, omnipresent, merciful, faithful, and eternal God who loves us so much that He sent His own Son to take our punishment for sin upon Himself, willfully laying down His own life as full payment for all our transgressions (past,

November 21st, 2021

“A Reason for Thanks-Giving: Christ is Coming Back”

2Peter 3:1-10

present, future), so that there is now no condemnation for believers, but instead we receive the eternal reward of living with Him forever in heaven.

God promised Noah never again to destroy the earth with water (**Genesis 9:11**), “I establish My covenant with you; and all flesh shall never again be cut by the water of the flood, neither shall there again be a flood to destroy the earth,” (**Genesis 9:15**), “and I will remember My covenant, which is between Me and you and every living creature of all flesh; and never again shall the water become a flood to destroy all flesh.”

In **2Peter 3:7**, we are told that by God’s Word, “the present heavens and earth are being reserved for fire, kept for the day of judgment and destruction of ungodly men.” So, the pre-Flood world system that opposed God was destroyed by water; and the present world system that opposes God will be destroyed by fire.

God’s Word often associates fire with the final outpouring of God’s judgement on unrighteousness.

Isaiah 66:15-16, “For behold, the Lord will come in fire and His chariots like the whirlwind, to render His anger with fury, and His rebuke with flames of fire. For the Lord will execute judgment by fire and by His sword on all flesh, and those slain by the Lord will be many.”

Malachi 4:1, “For behold, the day is coming, burning like a furnace; and all the arrogant and every evildoer will be chaff; and the day that is coming will set them ablaze,” says the Lord of hosts, ‘so that it will leave them neither root nor branch.’”

Matthew 3:10-12, “The axe is already laid at the root of the trees; therefore every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. ‘As for me, I baptize you with water for repentance, but He who is coming after me is mightier than I, and I am not fit to remove His sandals; He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. His winnowing fork is in His hand, and He will thoroughly clear His threshing floor; and He will gather His wheat into the barn, but He will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire.’”

2Thessalonians 1:6-8, “For after all it is only just for God to repay with affliction those who afflict you, and to give relief to you who are afflicted and to us as well when the Lord Jesus will be revealed from heaven with His mighty angels in flaming fire, dealing out retribution to those who do not know God and to those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus.”

Just as there had been plenty of water above the earth, on the earth, and under the earth, for God to submerge the surface of the earth, even over the top of the highest mountains; so there will be plenty of fire to lay bare everything by fire. When you look up at night, consider the billions of burning stars, and that below the ten-mile thick crust of the earth is a core of molten rock, estimated to be 12,400° F. All of creation is atomic in nature (made from atoms). We are aware of

November 21st, 2021

“A Reason for Thanks-Giving: Christ is Coming Back”

2Peter 3:1-10

what happens when an atom is split. What about billions and billions of atoms splitting at the same time, like one giant nuclear bomb? That would start a chain reaction that could disintegrate the universe by fire.

Read **2Peter 3:8...** One day is like a thousand years to the lord, and a thousand years like one day. What does the mean? In Psalm 90:4, Moses says, “For a thousand years in Your sight are like yesterday when it passes by, or as a watch in the night.” Christ’s return may seem far off to those who wait, but in God’s perspective it is imminent, it can happen at any time.

Read **2Peter 3:9-10...** God is merciful and long-suffering, He doesn’t want anyone to die in their sins, but instead for everyone to come to a knowledge of the truth (**John 14:6**), Jesus said, “I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father but through Me,” (**1Timothy 2:3-4**), “This is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Savior, who desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth.”

Christ will return to the earth for judgement (cf. **Revelation 19**), at the end of the Tribulation Period, just prior to the Millennial Kingdom; but not until every living person who will be saved, has been saved. Once all of those who believe in Christ are accounted for, judgement will be rendered on all the ungodly, all those who reject Christ; for God’s patience will run out.

Look back at **2Peter 3:9**, “The Lord is not slow about His promise, as some count slowness, but is patient [Greek, *makrothumeo* meaning, *God has a massive capacity for storing up anger and wrath before it overflows into judgement*] with you, not wishing for any to perish but for all to come to repentance.”

God’s timing for Christ’s return will not be delayed, it will not be late, but will be according to God’s perfect timing, when the fullness of time has come, which will also coincide with God’s patience reaching its maximum capacity.

Those of you who have the assurance of salvation ought to continually be giving thanks to God. Anyone who has not yet repented of their sins and believed in Christ for salvation can be very thankful that there’s still time to do so (**John 3:16**), “For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life.” (**John 3:36**), “He who believes in the Son has eternal life; but he who does not obey the Son will not see life, [for] the wrath of God remains on him,” because (**Acts 4:12**), “there is salvation in no one else; for there is no other name under heaven that has been given among men by which we must be saved,” (**Philippians 2:9-11**), “God... ..bestowed on Him the name which is above every name, so that at the name of Jesus every knee will bow, of those who are in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and that every tongue will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father,” (**1John 5:11-13**), “God has given us eternal life, and this life is in

November 21st, 2021

“A Reason for Thanks-Giving: Christ is Coming Back”

2Peter 3:1-10

His Son. He who has the Son has the life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have the life. These things I have written to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, so that you may know that you have eternal life.”

Out of all of the billions of people who have ever been born, if you have received forgiveness for your sins (past, present, and future) you have eternal life in Christ, and you should be overwhelmingly and continually thankful.

What are you going to do with that marvelous message?

1Thessalonians 5:16-18, “Rejoice always; pray without ceasing; in everything give thanks; for this is God’s will for you in Christ Jesus.”

Pastor Mike

>'(((><