

Jesus juva

Sunday, December 21, 2025 | Between Advents

Week 2 | 2 Peter 3:8-13 | “Perspective, Pt. 2”

READ: 2 Peter 3:8-13 (ESV)

⁸ But do not overlook this **one fact**, beloved, that with the Lord **one day** is as **a thousand years**, and **a thousand years as one day**. 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. ¹⁰ 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.

¹¹ Since all these things are thus to be dissolved, what **sort** of people ought you to be in lives of **holiness** and **godliness**, ¹² 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! ¹³ But according to his promise we are **waiting** for new heavens and a new earth in which righteousness dwells.

This passage is divided into four parts:

1.) Vs. 1-7 – The **Inviolability** of God’s Word

Takeaway #1: The **Scriptural** defines the **physical**.

Reality is not mere physicality; there are multiple dimensions to it, from the emotional to the intellectual to the spiritual. But the final word on all of it comes from God’s word; **it is more reliable than reality** itself. Jesus said heaven and earth will pass away, but his word will never pass away (cf. Matt. 24:35); not even the smallest stroke of the pen will be lost (cf. Matt. 5:18). **So, let the scoffers scoff, the mockers mock, and the jokers joke. God will have the last laugh.**

2.) Vs. 8-10 – The **Inevitability** of God’s Will

Vs. 8 – Peter tells his readers not to “overlook this **one fact**, beloved, that with the Lord **one day** is as **a thousand years**, and **a thousand years as one day**.” The scoffers “**deliberately overlooked**” (vs. 5) the **inviolability** of God’s word, and now he didn’t want his readers to overlook the **eternity** of God’s being.

Saying that 1 day = 1,000 years and 1,000 years = 1 day **is not a mathematical equation whereby we can calculate God’s timing of future events**. This is poetic language. Peter is paraphrasing Psa. 90:4, which says, “**For a thousand years in your sight are but as yesterday**

when it is past, or as a watch in the night.” And both the apostle and the psalmist are illustrating the same point: *God’s perception of time*.

Unlike us, God is timeless. He is the only truly eternal being in the universe since he has *no beginning*. He was before the beginning. And, as we know thanks to Albert Einstein, time is relative to the observer (aka time dilation). A person traveling in a car with another person will appear stationary to those inside, but to those outside, they'll appear to be moving from point A to point B. We're in the car traveling through time. God is outside the car and can see time from start to finish.

Vs. 9 – So, considering God’s perception of time, Peter says, “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.” Peter’s point is the same one that Gandalf the Gray made in *The Lord of the Rings*: God is never late. Nor is he early. He arrives precisely when he means to. **The cause of the Lord’s *seeming* delay isn’t due to his negligence; it’s due to his tolerance.**

If God were intolerant—if he were impatient—he would've dealt with humanity's sin long ago, and we all would've perished. But because he does not wish “that any should perish, but that all should reach repentance,” the Lord is “patient towards” humanity. The scoffers thought that since the world hadn't been completely done away with, this meant that either the Messiah hadn't come or that God was indifferent. But they got it wrong. God hasn't fulfilled all the promises of the Messiah yet because, when he doesn't, there's no turning back. Once Jesus Christ returns, it'll be too late to repent. And so, the Lord ***endures*** man’s sin so that some will have time to repent.

After instructing Timothy to pray “for all people for kings and all who are in high positions” (1 Tim. 2:2), he says the rationale for such universal prayer is because God “desires all people to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth” (1 Tim. 2:4). **God isn't sitting idly by. He does not delay the inevitable without good reason. He’s patiently waiting for the proper time when all who will be saved are saved.**

Vs. 10 – So, while the Lord is patient, his patience will not last. Peter reminds his readers that “the day of the Lord will come like a thief.” “The day of the Lord” coming like a “thief” is a reference to the Olivet Discourse, in which the Lord spoke about the end of the world. Towards the end of that lesson, Jesus said,

“But concerning that day and hour no one knows, not even the angels of heaven, nor the Son, but the Father only. For as were the days of Noah, so will be the coming of the

Son of Man. For as in those days before the flood, they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day when Noah entered the ark, and they were unaware until the flood came and swept them all away, so will be the coming of the Son of Man. Then two men will be in the field; one will be taken and one left. Two women will be grinding at the mill; one will be taken and one left.

Therefore, stay awake, for you do not know on what day your Lord is coming. But know this, that if the master of the house had known in what part of the night the thief was coming, he would have stayed awake and would not have let his house be broken into. Therefore, you also must be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect" (Matt. 24:36-44).

What was for others just another day was for Noah the day the world ended and a new one began. So will it be again.

Jesus's coming will be a surprise. The choice before us is whether we will be pleasantly surprised or caught with our pants down. Will we "stay awake" and "be ready" as if we were trying to defend our home from a "thief" or will we fall asleep, complacently allowing ourselves to be robbed blind when Christ returns? Peter says that when Jesus returns, 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." There will be nothing left. There will be no place to go. Those who are not ready will lose everything.

Takeaway #2: God restrains the inevitable, granting sinners time to repent.

The universe is not eternal. Eventually, the end will come. And suppose you live long enough to see it. What will you do when the stars fall, the sky darkens, and the earth melts away?

But just as reality has an end, so, too, do we. Hebrews 9:27 says, "It is appointed for man to die once, and after that comes judgment." What are you going to do when your time comes? The Lord is not lazy; he's long-suffering. He does not play; he is patient. For a time, he may stay his hand for the sake of a sinner, but sentencing is, nevertheless, inescapable.

Are you ready to meet the Lord today? Are you awake, living a life of repentance for the Lord? Or have you fallen asleep? Have you become lax in your Christian life?

3.) Vs. 11-13 – The Integrity of God's Waiters

Vs. 11-12 – In light of the inevitable, Peter says it is clear "what sort of people" we should be, and gives some traits that ought to characterize our lives:

The terms “holiness” and “godliness” constitute a tautology, in which one thing is expressed through different words. There is little discernible difference between traits like holiness and godliness. If a person were godly, they’d also be holy. Our conduct ought to reflect our attachment to God—e.g., wearing sports memorabilia.

Peter makes this very point in his other epistle, when he says,

“As obedient children, do not be conformed to the passions of your former ignorance, but as he who called you is holy, you also be holy in all your conduct, since it is written, ‘You shall be holy, for I am holy’” (1 Pe 1:14–16).

Christians have switched teams, and their “conduct” ought to reflect that change.

Peter says we are “waiting...the coming of the day of God.” And waiting, from a scriptural standpoint, is not a passive exercise; it is **active waiting** (cf. Rom. 8:25).

The psalmist says,

“I wait for the LORD, my soul waits, and in his word I hope; my soul waits for the Lord *more* [emphasis added] than watchmen for the morning, *more* [emphasis added] than watchmen for the morning” (Ps 130:5-6).

James says,

“Be patient, therefore, brothers, until the coming of the Lord. See *how* [emphasis added] the farmer waits for the precious fruit of the earth, being patient about it, until it receives the early and the late rains. You also, be patient. Establish your hearts, for the coming of the Lord is at hand” (Jas 5:7–8).

The Lord told Habakkuk,

“Write the vision; make it plain on tablets, so he may run who reads it. For still the vision awaits its appointed time; it *hastens* [emphasis added] to the end—it will not lie. If it seems slow, wait for it; it will surely come; it will not delay” (Hab 2:2-3).

Followers of God of every age are called to **readily** anticipate and **eagerly** expect the fulfillment of his promises—e.g., going into labor (cf. Isa 40:31).¹

¹ Schreiner, Thomas R., *1&2 Peter AND Jude*, Christian Standard Commentary, (Holman Reference, 2020), 466, “The term “wait for” (*prosdokaō*) occurs three times in the space of three verses (3:12-14), designating the *eager expectation* [emphasis added] believers should have for the coming of Christ and the fulfillment of God’s future promises.”

And Peter says that, as we live lives of holiness and godliness, actively but patiently waiting on the Lord's return, these things are, paradoxically, "hastening the coming of the day of God." The Greek term translated as "hastening" is *speudō*, and its most natural meaning is that of acceleration (cf. Lu. 2:16; 19:5, 6; Ac. 20:16). **By living as God intends us to live, we can accelerate God's timetable for the end of the world.** This idea was deeply rooted in a Jewish mind. Peter and his fellow Israelites knew that "hastening" the end of the world and one's personal holiness were closely related.²

When we pray, "Your kingdom come" (Matt. 6:10), we are surely hoping that our prayers affect when God's kingdom will come, right?³ And Jesus said, "This gospel of the kingdom will be proclaimed throughout the whole world as a testimony to all nations, and then [emphasis added] the end will come" (Matt. 24:3). In other words, the more we preach the gospel, and the farther we go with the gospel, the closer we get to Christ's return. The more that people repent and turn from their sins the nearer we are to the "times of refreshing" (Ac. 3:20). And Paul said that not "until the fullness of the Gentiles has come in" will Jesus come back (cf. Rom. 11:25). For every non-Jewish person who gets saved, we are that much closer to the end of the world.

This is not to say that God is waiting on us. He is still the primary one who will "hasten" the end (cf. Isa. 60:22). But it is to say that the end of the world will come about by the sovereignty of God working through human agents to accomplish his purposes. The more aligned we are with God, the more inclined God will be to come and make our faith a reality. **When we walk in holiness and godliness, earnestly waiting for Christ's return, we expedite the apocalypse.**

For a second time (cf. vs. 10), Peter reminds us, "The heavens will be set on fire and dissolved, and the heavenly bodies will melt as they burn!" **It is not if but when. It is not a matter of possibility but inevitability.** God is patient towards us, but that patience will not last forever. *Eventually*, the end will come, and reality, as we know it, will burn. All the cares and concerns of this life will be no more. Like rubbish thrown into an incinerator, it'll all go up in a puff of smoke. **The false teachers who wondered, "Where is the promise of his coming" (vs. 4), will**

² Dale C. Allison Jr., *Interpreting Jesus* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2025), 23, "The hastening of the end is, in y. *Ta'an. 1:1* (63d), a direct response to Israel's merit. Second Peter 3:12 is similar: the faithful can speed on the advent of the last day by living holy and godly lives, because this will move God to act. In other words, human behavior affects divine behavior, as also in 2 Clement 12:6: 'When you do these things [good works], he [the Lord] says, the kingdom of my Father will come.'"

³ Schreiner (2020), 467.

wonder no more. Christians and atheists alike will see the coming of the Lord. The former will rejoice while the latter will lament.

Vs. 13 – This, of course, does not mean we only have fire to look forward to. We would be most miserable if we, like the unbeliever, had only destruction. No. “But according to his promise, we are waiting for new heavens and a new earth in which righteousness dwells.” From the ashes of this fallen world, a new world will rise. And Paul tells us,

“Creation waits with *eager longing* [emphasis added] for the revealing of the sons of God. For the creation was subjected to futility, not willingly, but because of him who subjected it, in hope that the creation itself will be set free from its bondage to corruption and obtain the freedom of the glory of the children of God. For we know that the whole creation has been groaning together in the pains of childbirth until now. And not only the creation, but we ourselves, who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as we wait eagerly for adoption as sons, the redemption of our bodies” (Ro 8:19-23).

Just as our bodies will be renewed, so all of creation will be renewed. The land has long mourned over its fallen state (cf. Jer. 12:4). But someday, the unrighteousness which has attached itself to this world will be burned away, and, in its place, Peter says, “righteousness” will dwell.

Describing this moment, the Lord said,

“For behold, I create new heavens and a new earth, and the former things shall not be remembered or come into mind. But be glad and rejoice forever in that which I create; for behold, I create Jerusalem to be a joy, and her people to be a gladness. I will rejoice in Jerusalem and be glad in my people; no more shall be heard in it the sound of weeping and the cry of distress. No more shall there be in it an infant who lives but a few days, or an old man who does not fill out his days, for the young man shall die a hundred years old, and the sinner a hundred years old shall be accursed. They shall build houses and inhabit them; they shall plant vineyards and eat their fruit. They shall not build, and another inhabit; they shall not plant, and another eat; for like the days of a tree shall the days of my people be, and my chosen shall long enjoy the work of their hands. They shall not labor in vain or bear children for calamity, for they shall be the offspring of the blessed of the LORD, and their descendants with them. Before they call, I will answer; while they are yet speaking, I will hear. The wolf and the lamb shall graze

together; the lion shall eat straw like the ox, and dust shall be the serpent's food. They shall not hurt or destroy in all my holy mountain," says the LORD" (Isa 65:17-25).

This is our future. Not destruction but restoration. Not death but life.

Takeaway #3: When the last days are seen rightly and the days beyond them clearly, life today is lived correctly.

Augustine said, "He who loves the coming of the Lord is not he who affirms that it is far off, nor is it he who says it is near, but rather he who, whether it be far off or near, awaits it with sincere faith, steadfast hope, and fervent love."

Soli Deo Gloria

Video Description:

Between Advents | Week 2 | 2 Peter 3:8-13 | “Perspective, Pt. 2”

Last week, we learned that in "the last days," there will be "scoffers" who will mock the claims of Christianity. In particular, they will deny that the advent of Christ had any real effect on the world. But Peter demonstrated that just as the word of the Lord brought the world into existence and, in like manner, brought about the flood, so, too, is it holding back the fires of judgment. Though it may not seem like it to us, God's word is at work. And we must earnestly cling to *that* word if we are to survive what's coming. Our senses are not the final authority. The *Scriptural* defines the *physical*.

Today, we'll attempt to answer the following questions. In light of the inviolability of God's word, why has the Lord delayed? If God's word says that he is indeed coming, why hasn't he already come? And, more importantly, what sort of people ought we be in light of Christ's return? How should his second advent affect our lives today?

A discussion of Advent is not merely theological but also practical. Living in the light of the first coming, awaiting his second, will influence our day-to-day routine. If it doesn't, we haven't truly understood the meaning of Christmas.

Sermon Manuscript: <https://bit.ly/455EmBO>

Grace Pointe Baptist Church

12029 Eastern Ave.

Baltimore, MD 21220

Contact: info@GracePointeLife.com

Website: <https://www.gracepointelife.com>

Give here: <https://www.gracepointelife.com/give/>

Podcast Details:

Season 43 | 2