

L 8 ... Living in Light of Christ's Return

2 Peter 3:11-18

The previous passage concerning the return of Christ and end of the world should cause us to want to live with the ultimate end in view. Therefore, Peter asks, *Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be?* ([3:11a](#)).

Then, with what words does he describe how we should live?

The phrase *holy conversation* refers to separation from sin and dedication to God. *Godliness* refers to godly acts. Understanding future events should motivate us to live holy, godly lives. The remainder of this epistle reveals how we are to live in light of Christ's return. First ...

Live with anticipation (3:12-13)

This requires *looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God* ([3:12a](#)). One way we can hasten *the day of God* is through prayer. That's why Jesus taught us to pray, *Thy kingdom come* ([Mt 6:10a](#)). The word *coming* (PAROUSIA, par-oo-see'-ah) literally means "presence." It refers to both an arrival and a subsequent "presence with." *The day of God* is not the same as the *Day of the Lord* discussed in the previous lesson. *The day of God* refers to the time when, through Christ, God will *subdue all things unto himself* ([Philip 3:21b](#)).

According to [Philippians 3:21a](#), what else will occur at *the coming of the day of God*?

The word *wherein* ([2 Pet. 3:12b](#)) refers to the fact certain things must take place before *the coming of the day of God*. In preparation for *the day of God*, Peter writes: *the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat* ([3:12c](#)). For an explanation of these events, see the discussion of verse ten in Lesson Seven.

We should anticipate *the coming of the day of God* because it will result in the fulfillment of *his promise* ([3:13a](#)). The *promise* is *new heavens and a new earth* ([3:13b](#)). The word translated *new* (KAINOS, ki-nos') means *new* in kind or quality, or unlike what was previously known. Therefore, it will not be the old earth **renovated** but a totally *new earth created*. One thing we know about the *new earth* is it will be a place where *righteousness dwells exclusively* ([3:13c](#)). *And there shall in no wise enter into it any thing that defileth* ([Rev. 21:27a](#)).

What does God reveal about the *new heaven and new earth* in [Isaiah 65:17c](#)?

This means none of our *former* trials, problems, and heartaches will be *remembered*. Also, there will be no memory of sin. That's why there will be no more *sorrow ... crying ... nor pain* ([Rev. 21:4](#)).

That in itself is a *new* kind of world, and how wonderful it will be!

To live in light of Christ's return, **live with anticipation** and ...

Live with self-examination (3:14-16)

Since we anticipate, or *look for*, these happenings, what does Peter write in verse 14b–c?

The word *diligent* means to be careful and exert one's self. As we anticipate Christ's return, we must diligently try to live as God desires. Therefore, we should examine ourselves to see if we are truly, carefully exerting ourselves in prayer, Bible study, worship attendance, reaching others, etc.

In addition to exerting ourselves, we are to be *without spot*, which means without defilement or moral impurity. We are also to diligently seek to be *blameless*, which means without justifiable cause for reproach. We should have no outstanding fault that could cause someone to question our character or integrity.

We are also to be *in peace* with Him ([3:14](#)). There is a *peace with God* that refers to salvation ([Rom. 5:1](#)).

Yet, since Peter's readers are already believers, here it refers to *peace* of mind that gives us assurance as we anticipate Christ's return.

How is this *peace* described in [Isaiah 26:3](#)?

Part of our examination should be to see if we are doing everything possible to win the lost. That's why Peter writes, *And account that the longsuffering of our Lord is salvation* ([3:15a](#), [3:9](#)). The Lord is patiently waiting so many more people can be saved. The fate of the lost should cause us to do everything we can to win our friends, relatives, associates, and neighbors.

This is because of what fact found in [2 Corinthians 5:20a–b](#)?

Peter continues, *even as our beloved brother Paul also according to the wisdom given unto him hath written unto you* ([3:15b](#)). It is reassuring to read that Peter calls Paul his *beloved brother*. More than twenty years before, they had a disagreement because Peter sided with those who taught Gentile believers had to follow Jewish customs regarding circumcision and unclean food ([Gal. 2:11-14](#)). When Peter came to Antioch, he refused to associate with the many Gentile believers there.

As a result, what does Paul write in [Galatians 2:11](#)?

Obviously, both Peter and Paul practiced what they preached about love and forgiveness. Still referring to Paul, Peter writes, *As also in all his epistles, speaking in them of these things; in which are some things hard to be understood, which they that are unlearned and unstable wrest, as they do also the other scriptures, unto their own destruction (3:16)*. Some things Paul wrote about the Second Coming and end of the world are *hard* to understand. This causes *unlearned*, or untaught, *and unstable* false teachers to pervert God's Word to fit their own deceitful goals.

False teachers were distorting some things Paul had written about the Second Coming to fit their selfish purposes. This should not be surprising since they also perverted *other scriptures*. The fact Peter refers to Paul's writings and also to *other scriptures* means Paul's writings were already considered to be inspired Scripture.

When people pervert the Word of God, they also bring about *their own destruction*, or judgment (3:16). Therefore, we should examine our doctrinal beliefs and teachings to be sure we are not perverting God's Word.

How does [2 Corinthians 13:5a](#) express that fact?

We should *examine* ourselves to see if every area of our lives is in accordance with *the faith*, both in doctrine and behavior.

To live in light of Christ's return, **live with anticipation, with self-examination**, and ...

Live with augmentation (3:17-18)

The word "augmentation" means increase, growth, or reinforcement. No matter how mature or spiritual we may be, we must continually augment what we know to keep from becoming easy prey for false teachers. Peter expresses it like this, *Ye therefore, beloved, seeing ye know these things before, beware lest ye also, being led away with the error of the wicked, fall from your own steadfastness (3:17)*.

There will always be false teachers who gain a great following, even among so-called Christians.

That's why we are given what command in [1 Thessalonians 5:21a](#)?

We should examine the authenticity of everything we are taught. If not, we can *fall from* our spiritual *steadfastness*. This refers not to losing our salvation but to losing spiritual footing. If we constantly augment what we are taught with our own study of God's Word, and then test everything with that knowledge, we will not be lead astray by false teachers nor lose our spiritual footing.

Peter concludes this epistle, *But grow in grace (3:18a)*. The verb *grow* is present tense, which means we are to continually grow. Healthy growth takes place in a functional, loving family. This is why we need the local church to augment our personal, spiritual growth.

Growing in *grace* refers to all the virtues of the Christian life that Peter mentions in [1:5-7](#). This requires *knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ* ([3:18b](#)). We grow in *knowledge* as we pray, study the Word of God, listen to godly pastors and teachers, etc. The result of continually growing in *grace and in the knowledge* will be *glory* to the Lord Jesus *both now and for ever* ([3:18b](#)).

This eternal *glory* will begin with what event described in [Philippians 2:11](#)?

Peter ends this epistle with the word *Amen*, which means “let it be so.”

As an authentic Christian, you will strive to live in light of Christ’s return with

ANTICIPATION,

SELF-EXAMINATION,

AUGMENTATION.