FBCPANHANDLE

SERMON REFLECTION GUIDE

Christian Doctrine, Part 14: God's Kingdom (The Doctrine of the Last Days)
2 Peter 3:8-14 - November 15, 2026

SERMON OUTLINE

Intro - A dog's life, and our desire to have the same. Is there a better way to live - towards God and towards culture - during the last days of human history?
The "*last days*" might also be called the inaugurated Kingdom of God on earth, between the two arrivals of Jesus Christ. We are in the "*last days*", though not necessarily the "final days".

A. The Kingdom of God — *Already*, but *Not Yet*

- Mark 1:15 - Jesus announces his arrival as the inauguration of the "kingdom of God"
- Revelation 11:15 - looking into the future, anticipates the victory of the "kingdom of God"
- The Bible is clear that God's Kingdom on earth has commenced, but is not yet fully realized.
- **Illustration**: D-Day (decisive victory, 6/44) until VE-Day (recognized victory, 5/45)
  - **Dangerous Extremes**
    1. *Forgetting* the "already", *fixated* on the "not yet"
    2. *Apathetic* about "already", *ignoring* the "not yet"
- Peter's language about the approaching end of the current world (2 Pet. 3:10) reveals that he not only expects it, but he views reality *as though it were already the case*.
- The reader is not supposed to ask whether it will happen, but rather "what sort of people ought you to be?" (v. 11)

B. Living as Kingdom Citizens — *In*, but *Not Of*

- The phrasing of "in the world, but not of the world" comes directly from Jesus as he prays "the High Priestly Prayer" in John 17. He prays knowing that his followers will be "in the world" (Jn. 17:11) even though they are "not of this world." (Jn. 17:14, 16)
- Jesus anticipates his followers will live in/alongside the cultures and imaginations of this world. However, they will not be captivated by or beholden to this world.
  - **Dangerous Extremes**
    1. *Isolation/Exile — Neither* in *nor* of the world
    - *The world is too bad!* So, they cannot obey Jesus, and cannot make disciples.
    2. *Assimilation — Both* in *and* of the world
    - *The world is too good!* So, they will not obey Jesus, and will not make disciples.
  - **Appropriate Christian Tensions**
    1. I'm victorious, even if you can't see it yet.
    2. I live here, but my home is really somewhere else.
- Peter keeps the "last days" as his guiding principle, not simply a dry doctrine.
- 2 Peter 3:10-14 is among the most shocking statements in the New Testament. Everything material is going to be consumed by God's glory and wrath on the final day.
- Everything we consider significant or lasting will be gone just as quick as any trinket. Calling into question: why do we place so much value in temporary things?
- The text implies that only that which is holy will survive, while all earthly things will perish.
  - How Then Should We Live?
    1. In holiness & godliness (v. 11)
    2. Without spot or blemish, and at peace (v. 14)
- This bridges last week's doctrine (sanctification) with next week's doctrine (eternity).
- We are to be "*waiting*" (v. 12, 13, 14) for God to make earth anew (*kainos*)
  - **Two Motivations**
    1. *Negative* — Everything we live for outside of Jesus will be burned up.
    2. *Positive* — A brand new glorious world is coming for the saints, so live like it!

FBCPANHANDLE

SERMON REFLECTION QUESTIONS

1. Do you ever wonder if there is more to life? Do you feel like you are in a hamster wheel of repetitive days, weeks, and years?
2. Read Hebrews 1:1-2. What do we mean when we say “last days”? How is this different from “final days”?
3. How can we say that the Kingdom of God is “already, not yet”?
4. What are the dangers of not understanding this tension?
5. Are you prone to see this world as too bad (& withdraw) or as too good (& assimilate)?
6. Why does Jesus say that his followers will be both “in the world” and “not of this world”?
7. What are the dangers of not understanding this tension?
8. How does Peter intend for us to live as followers of Jesus? How does keeping our eyes on the finish line help us to live godly lives today?