DIVING DEEPER DISCUSSION GUIDE



TEXT SUMMARY

In this week's text, <u>2 Peter 3:8-12</u>, Peter deals with the false teachers' claims that Christ would not return as He promised. Peter explains three things about the Second Coming of Christ:

- that the seeming delay in His Return has to do with God's timetable, which isn't proportioned as we would expect
- that "the Day of the Lord" (Christ's Return in judgment) will be catastrophic
- that in light of the certainty of His Return, our part is to wait in expectancy and holiness

INTRODUCTION (OBSERVATION):

- 1. Peter offers two explanations for the apparent slowness of the Return of Christ (v. 8-9). What are those reasons?
- 2. There's a vivid contrast in the way Peter describes the Day of the Lord (v. 10); it will be both surprising and dramatic. What descriptions does he give of how that Day will come and what it will be like when it does?

DISCUSSION (INTERPRETATION):

- 1. The "one day = thousand years" formula (v. 8) is one of the most familiar expressions in Scripture. What does it mean? Is this a mathematical formula?
- 2. Where did Peter get his word picture of the Coming of Christ "like a thief"? What does that word picture mean?
- 3. If God is not willing for anyone to perish (v. 9), why do many perish?
- 4. How can we "hasten the coming of the day of God" (v. 12)?

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SO WHAT? (APPLICATION):

- Peter argues that we cannot impose our sense of proportion on God's timetable (a millennium is to Him as a day to us).
 - Are you dealing with a situation now in which God's timing seems extraordinarily and frustratingly slow?
 - Have you ever seen in the past when God's apparent slowness was actually His perfect, meticulous timing (if He had acted as you wanted as soon as you wanted, things would have been worse)?
- 2. Peter argues that the seeming slowness of God's timing is not only due to His different timetable, it's also due to His patience: He is "not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance" (v. 9, KJV).
 - Who do you know who has come to faith in the past ten years?
 - What effect does this knowledge (that He is not willing that any should perish) have on your longing for the Return of Christ?
- 3. **Peter got his "like a thief" language from Christ Himself (Matt 24),** suggesting that we will all be surprised when it happens.
 - If the timing of His Return is sure to be surprising, how are we to account for the many predictions of timing in Christian media?
 - How can a preoccupation with prediction of the timing of His Coming be a detriment to faith?
 - If we cannot be sure of the timing, how should we regard the "signs of the times"?

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