

Preparing Our Hearts for the Return of Jesus

3-What Should Our Manner of Conduct Be (2Pet: 3)

I. Prelude to Scared Hearts

- In all my Christian Life which is approaching 34 years, of actually being a diligent church goer, I can count on one hand those who have been diligent to preach this topic.

I am currently watching a Podcast which helps me gather my thoughts on this topic, and John Bevere said, in 40 years he has never talked about this, and it brought great conviction to him recently.

One of the letters to the Seven Churches, Jesus talk to the leaders of a church about having a compromised heart. And while many things can cause us to be compromised, imagine the reluctance to preach this message because the spirit of controversy, argument, and spitefulness that surrounds even speaking of Jesus' Return.

Here is one example of the hurt that's caused in the church that John Bevere mentions:

In 1988, a book called the ***88 Reasons Why The Rapture Will Be In 1988*** by Edgar Whisenant. Bevere gives a recount of his experience which he bought in to it hook line and sinker. But the point is that many people sold everything, they went around the wrong way, because of a false teacher.

This Edgar guy would say stuff like "Only if the Bible is in error am I wrong; and I say that to every preacher in town" and "[I]f there were a king in this country and I could gamble with my life, I would stake my life on Rosh Hashana 88."

After September of 1988, what happened to these people. How many stayed as Christians? Those that did, what was their response to even mentioning anything about the 2nd Coming of Jesus?

- That is an example and there are thousands of similar experiences that have created a fear to even talk about this.

If I were to ask you from a 30,000ft perspective who would you blame for this mess, who would you say is to blame for this? Satan

Did the Holy Spirit use COVID to reestablish the theme of Jesus' Return back in the heart of church?

Does the heart behind this entire subject reflect what Peter talks about in ***2Pet 3***.

II. Urgency Needed

So in light of the American church in the last 50 years (I am using America because we are the perfect picture of the church that **fails**) when you look at what Peter is talking about,

its Jesus' 2nd coming,

the mockers (which is caused by false teachers scaring hearts in the past)

The New heavens and Earth, and all that will happen. These things are found in ***2Pet 3:10-13***)

Peter then says ¹⁴***Therefore, beloved, looking forward to these things, be diligent to be found by Him in peace, without spot and blameless;***

Peter is establishing that a proper heart should be looking forward to these things and shows us it's a heart that is diligent in peace, w/o spot and blameless.

Note ** We will go into a deep dive into what this heart looks like as we go deeper into what a Prepared heart is)***

¹⁵***and consider that the longsuffering of our Lord is salvation—as also our beloved brother Paul, according to the wisdom given to him, has written to you, ¹⁶as also in all his epistles, speaking in them of these things, in which are some things hard to understand, which untaught and unstable people twist to their own destruction, as they do also the rest of the Scriptures.***

Peter is describing to us that Jesus' second coming has delayed because of His patience for Salvation. Which in return, points to that an aspect of a Prepared heart is the urgency to see people come to Jesus and disciples.

Then Peter point to Paul claiming that Paul in its basic form in all His epistles has conveyed Peters Ch3 message. And Peter in 100% right!!!

And Peter then makes an important point, ***speaking in them of these things, in which are some things hard to understand*** The issue here points to one of my favorite verses in the bible.

¹⁴ The secret (Intimacy) of the Lord is with those who fear Him, And He will show them His covenant. (Ps 25:14)

What this does, it shows us that the mysteries of God are revealed to His people that search for it in the innermost place, His Heart.

"It is the glory of God to conceal a matter, but the glory of kings is to search out a matter" (Prov 25:2)
To go further and deeper of His secrets this is explained in ***Rev 1:1***

¹ The Hisgalus (The Revelation the exposure of what is Nistar (Hidden), Sod (Secret), Raz (Mystery)) of Rebbe, Melech HaMoshiach Yehoshua which Hashem gave to him to show to his mesharetim (servants, klei kodesh, ministers) MAH DI LEHEVE (what will happen), the things which are destined to take place, and speedily; Rebbe, Melech HaMoshiach made it known by sending his malach (angel) to his mesharet (servant, keli kodesh, minister), Yochanan. (Rev 1:1 TOJB)

So when that place where secrets are revealed, that place of surrender and transformation, is somewhere we frequent it changes your perspective.

But if you're a minister of all things superficial, and like the Pharisees are more law minded than also being law and heart minded you can fall easily into ... ***which untaught and unstable people twist to their own destruction, as they do also the rest of the Scriptures.***

- I want to make an astonishing revelation to you now. The mention of Jesus' 2nd Coming is the 2nd most talked about topic in the bible in the entire Bible, next to Salvation.
- It is mentioned 318 times in the New Testament
- 23 of 27 books in the NT mention this.
- 1 out of 30 verses in the New Testament talk about the 2nd Coming of Jesus
- and if you look at the early church fathers (1st, 2nd and 3rd century church) like Polycarp, Irenaeus, Hippolytus, etc. This topic was the 2nd most written thing.

So here is the question I have asked myself and I hope you and all the preachers and Christians on earth ask themselves.

If God who is perfect in wisdom gives this much attention to the 2nd coming of Jesus, what should be the fruit of us reading studying and meditating on this?

I would argue it shouldn't be slothfulness or contentious arguments but passion to advance the Kingdom. Because this should create an urgency meanwhile it sanctifies us.

- This Urgency idea is an idea that as Humans and in the worlds perspective we misunderstand. We must have an eternal mindset and the Mind of God... ***But we have the mind of Christ. (1 Cor 2:16)***

So when Jesus says:

¹¹ Behold, I am coming quickly! (Rev 3:11)

⁷ "Behold, I am coming quickly! Blessed is he who keeps the words of the prophecy of this book." (Rev 22:7)

¹² "And behold, I am coming quickly, and My reward is with Me, (Rev 22:12)

and Paul says:

²⁹*But let me say this, dear brothers and sisters: The time that remains is very short. So from now on, those with wives should not focus only on their marriage. ³⁰Those who weep or who rejoice or who buy things should not be absorbed by their weeping or their joy or their possessions. ³¹Those who use the things of the world should not become attached to them. For this world as we know it will soon pass away. (1Cor 7:29-31)*

¹⁸*So we don't look at the troubles we can see now; rather, we fix our gaze on things that cannot be seen. For the things we see now will soon be gone, but the things we cannot see will last forever. (2Cor 4:18)*

⁵*Let everyone see that you are considerate in all you do. Remember, the Lord is coming soon. (Phil 4:5)*

⁷*The end of the world is coming soon. Therefore, be earnest and disciplined in your prayers. (1Pet 4:7)*

So these guys are writing like this and they are in the 1st Century, and they are writing like this. Fast Forward 1970 years or so and we are thinking, *"hmm what's going on here?"*

Because it doesn't make sense that they talked like this and we are here almost 2,000 years later and we are trying to digest their words but our deceitful hearts cannot make sense of this.

****This is why we need we need the Holy Spirit to really help us digest this information and to receive an eternal understanding****

When Peter says there will be mockers, and there was a flood and fire is being stored up for judgement. He then make this incredible statement that we went into a little last week.

⁸*But you must not forget this one thing, dear friends: A day is like a thousand years to the Lord, and a thousand years is like a day. ⁹The Lord isn't really being slow about his promise, as some people think. No, he is being patient for your sake. (2Pet 3:8)*

**** Ok Analogy time.....let's take the last 6,000 years and divide that up into a 24 hour period.**

2,000 years is like 8 hours. Now we have a wedding at midnight the next day, and there are things we must get done.

So from Adam to Abraham is like from midnight to 8am. We are still 16 hours from the wedding starting but we are awaking, making sure the food order is being prepared, etc.

From Abraham to Jesus is 2,000 years and another 8 hours, now its 6pm. The wedding is still 6 hours away but the wedding party starts to arrive, the wedding planner is probably going nuts, a little.

From Jesus to His 2nd Coming is another 2,000 years.

Let's say Israel coming back in 1948 is the bride putting on her dress, the wedding planner is going nuts at this point. The only difference in the wedding the Bride is standing at the alter, the Groom is the one that walks down. We are at the point in History, that we have all taken out place, Groomsmen are in place, Bridesmaid are in place, hair done, make up done. All are seated and we are waiting for the Music to start. What I am trying to illustrate is the anticipation for the wedding to start begins to rise as we get closer to midnight. If we were to take a nap at 6pm, 8pm, 10pm, 11pm because we have been up since midnight the previous night we can miss the wedding but also the importance of anticipation and doing what needs to get done to make the wedding start on time, and with everything you need.**

God is not deceptive, He sees the value and the wisdom of us living with an urgency. 6pm started the "Last 2,000 years" and the heart He gave Paul, Peter and John was with an urgent heart.

God is not being mean, He established this heart to protect us. Because if we are the bride, we don't have time to go play a round of golf at 10pm. That heart is something that someone instills if they want to sabotage the wedding.

What does Jesus say about the wrong heart that doesn't adhere to this urgency... ⁴⁸*But if that evil servant says in his heart, 'My master is delaying his coming,' (Mt 24:48)*

This is why I believe the apostles write about this 1 out of 30 verses, why it's the second most talked about thing in the whole bible. Because God knows it's soon to Him, but He also understands it might not be soon to us, so He encourages us to embrace the 2nd Coming of Jesus.

- I think it has been taught to us and to many generations over the past many centuries that Jesus' second coming is not about salvation, so therefore it takes a back seat.

I believe this is such a demonic teaching....let me explain.

⁴⁵ "A faithful, sensible servant is one to whom the master can give the responsibility of managing his other household servants and feeding them. ⁴⁶If the master returns and finds that the servant has done a good job, there will be a reward. ⁴⁷I tell you the truth, the master will put that servant in charge of all he owns. ⁴⁸But what if the servant is evil and thinks, 'My master won't be back for a while,' ⁴⁹and he begins beating the other servants, partying, and getting drunk? ⁵⁰The master will return unannounced and unexpected, ⁵¹and he will cut the servant to pieces and assign him a place with the hypocrites. In that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth. (Mt 24:45-51)

This scripture explains our mental struggle with time and how it relates to the bible. Humanity in Christianity has displayed the heart that lacks urgency in the aspect that we have created 4 primary views that distort Jesus' 2nd Coming. That is no different than the servant who has lost the essence of what His master entrusted him with because the timetable he expected his master to return was not accurate and doubt settles in whether or not he will return at all.

That's the whole "thief in the night" analogy Jesus uses. It's the same reaction you get when wrongdoing is being committed and suddenly you're exposed. You are caught with your proverbial "pants down".

It has everything to do with salvation because Jesus teaches us that, that very situation can make a lifelong Christian, love of Jesus soul lose His salvation. Because that person had in their hearts what Jesus would look like, and something completely different happens.

Which is why John says: **²⁸And now, little children, abide in Him, that when He appears, we may have confidence and not be ashamed before Him at His coming. (1Jn 2:28)**

The enemy wants to create ambiguity around this topic, and cause discord because he understands that living a life without the urgency Peter, Paul and John had sets humanity up for failure at His 2nd coming. And while some of us can withstand the pressure of living a life without urgency like Paul describes in **1Cor 3:11-15**

¹¹For no other foundation can anyone lay than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ. ¹²Now if anyone builds on this foundation with gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, straw, ¹³each one's work will become clear; for the Day will declare it, because it will be revealed by fire; and the fire will test each one's work, of what sort it is. ¹⁴If anyone's work which he has built on it endures, he will receive a reward. ¹⁵If anyone's work is burned, he will suffer loss; but he himself will be saved,

But the reality is that these are few, the bible tells us of a "great" apostasy in the latter days.

So my question is how does this make you feel?