

# Living for that Day

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[ 0 : 00 ] My name is Paul Buckley. I pastor a church in Haverhill Mass. And I know a number of you. Some years ago, we helped you guys get started in 2015.

And I also serve as a provisional elder with Sean. So I just help him out with some other elders as well as he seeks to lead you guys.

It's wonderful to be here. It's wonderful to watch God at work in and through your church. And I haven't been here in a little while. I haven't been here since you came back to the school here. So it's wonderful that you're here back in East Cambridge.

And it's my privilege to proclaim God's Word this morning. I had asked Sean. I gave him some options. And he asked me to speak from 2 Peter 3. So in a little bit, we're going to stand and read that together.

Before you do that, though, let me ask you a question to kind of get you thinking about this passage. What would you do if you knew you had, for the best of reasons, one year left in your life?

[ 1 : 04 ] Now, the best of reasons, I think, are the story of Elijah, right? Where the Lord took him up bodily to heaven. So think of something like that. Some positive thing that's going to happen, not a negative thing. And so you know at the end of the year, you know, maybe like Elijah, you're going to be taken up into heaven.

But the thought experiment is about having a year, knowing that you have a year. What would you do? How would you live? What choices would you make?

Now let's say you know you have one day. Tomorrow would be your final full day. How would you think about what to do tomorrow?

Wouldn't it bring that idea? Wouldn't it bring great focus and clarity to what your priorities are, what you would want to do? And I know many of you are thinking, well, I would want to make sure I said goodbye to those I love.

Or maybe for some of you, I'd like to knock that one thing off the bucket list I never got to, the skydiving thing or something like that. Or maybe it's a little more down to earth, that local ice cream place I didn't get to go to.

[ 2 : 04 ] Or maybe you can combine it all together, go skydiving with your friends on that last day. Whatever it might be. There are a lot of different things you might choose to do. But that knowledge brings great focus.

Well, the reality is, the Bible teaches us that we all have one day awaiting us. It's unlikely to be tomorrow, but it's the final day.

The final day. There is a final day coming for all of us. The ultimate day for all of humanity. We sang about it a little bit. And the knowledge of having this final day awaiting us should bring the same sort of focus to our lives.

And really that's what this chapter in 2 Peter is about. So let's stand. Let me pray for the reading of God's Word. Then we will read together. If you're able, you can sit if you're not able to stand. That's fine. But we'll read God's Word together.

So if you have a Bible, open that up. We're not going to project it so that you can focus here. I think there are some Bibles on the table there. So if you need a Bible, maybe raise your hand. Someone can run you one. Or you can just listen with us as we read along.

[ 3 : 05 ] Let me pray for God's Word in this time. And then we'll read. Lord, we thank you for your Word. We thank you that you bring to us truth that brings great focus in our lives. And you not only want to inform us of this truth, but you want to empower us.

You want this truth to be a living truth in our lives. And so we ask now as we read your Word and as I proclaim your Word, would you breathe life into us through this truth. We thank you so much.

Bless the reading and the hearing of your Word. Be glorified in it, we pray. Amen. Let's read chapter 3. Listen as I read chapter 3, verse 1. This is now the second letter that I am writing to you, beloved. In both of them, I am stirring up your sincere mind by way of reminder that you should remember the predictions of the holy prophets and the commandment of the Lord and Savior through your apostles.

Knowing this, first of all, that scoffers will come in the last days with scoffing, following their own sinful desires. They will say, Where is the promise of His coming?

[ 4 : 06 ] For ever since the fathers fell asleep, all things are continuing as they were from the beginning of creation. For they deliberately overlook this fact, that the heavens existed long ago and the earth was formed out of water and through water by the Word of God.

And that by means of these, the world that then existed was deluged with water and perished. But by the same word, the heavens and earth that now exist are stored up for fire, being kept until the day of judgment and destruction of the ungodly.

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. 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.

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.

Since all these things are thus to be dissolved, what sort of people ought you to be in lives of holiness and godliness, 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.

[ 5 : 30 ] But according to His promise, we are waiting for new heavens and a new earth in which righteousness dwells. Therefore, beloved, since you are waiting for these, be diligent to be found by Him without spot or blemish and at peace, and count the patience of our Lord as salvation.

Just as our beloved brother Paul also wrote to you, according to the wisdom given him, as he does in all his letters when he speaks in them of these matters, there are some things in them that are hard to understand, which the ignorant and unstable twist to their own destruction.

As they do the other scriptures. You therefore, beloved, knowing this beforehand, take care that you are not carried away with the error of lawless people, and lose your own stability, but grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

To Him be the glory, both now and to the day of eternity. Amen. God's word from 2 Peter 3. You may be seated. Well, as you can tell, listening to God's word, that Peter is eager to help his readers think in terms of the ultimate day, the day of the Lord.

They are facing some challenges to that mindset, and Peter wants to bring them back, bring them back to Christ-centered wisdom. He's teaching, really, that we must live every day in light of the ultimate day.

[ 7 : 05 ] We must live every day in light of the ultimate day. He's doing three things in this chapter. First, he's calling us to be aware. Secondly, to be ready.

And thirdly, to be strengthened. So that's what we're going to do. We're just going to go through the chapter, learn about this idea of living every day in light of the ultimate day under these three different sub-points. So he starts out writing to his friends and telling them that he wants to remind them of these things.

He's saying he wants to stir up their sincere minds or sincere hearts. He knows that there's good things already there in his ears.

People are hearing this read. He knows that there's good things in their hearts already, but he wants to stir them up by way of reminder. It's an important point, really, this idea of reminding. Sometimes we can feel insulted when people remind us of things, right?

We can be like, I already know that. I already knew that. I knew that before you knew it. We can take offense. But if we're honest, we forget a lot of things, don't we? I forget many things, and it brings me some comfort to know, actually, when I was young, I'm almost 60 now, when I was in my teens even, I forgot things like my wallet.

[ 8 : 20 ] I would forget my homework assignments. I would forget to take out the trash. I even think I forgot Mother's Day once or twice. Not good when you're a kid. I still have those dreams, by the way. So sorry if this is bad news for you if you're a student now.

I still have those dreams that it's the end of the semester, and I forgot to go to class all semester long, and I have to take the final. I still have those. So I know that you're thinking, probably having those if you're young and thinking they'll stop.

Well, they haven't stopped for me. I have these nightmares about forgetting things. We forget lots of things, but then we remember all sorts of things that are obscure, don't we? Words to songs, the stats of your favorite athlete, things like that.

And yet we forget the most important thing, the good news of Jesus. And that's what Peter wants to do here. He wants to remind his people of the good news of Jesus because there's something in us, in our human nature, our fallen human nature, that can remember all these other things, perhaps, but we forget the most important thing, that Christ has died.

Christ has risen. He'll come again. Christ has overcome sin and death. God loves us and has sent God the Son for us that we might live in him. And this important news is something we need to be reminded of.

[ 9 : 31 ] And really, every time that we live outside of faith, hope, and love, outside of believing God and hoping and loving others in his name, we are forgetting the good news. And I do that all the time, every day.

There's moments throughout my days where I don't live in faith, hope, and love. And therefore, I know I've forgotten this good news. I need to be reminded, and all of us do, and it's really the most loving thing we can do for one another is to remind each other of the good news of Jesus.

And so that's what Peter's doing here for his friends. He loves them. He calls them beloved, actually. He calls them, I think, four times beloved in this passage. We don't call each other beloved these days. That's a little bit of a different word, right?

If someone came up to you and you had a friend and said, Oh, beloved, good to see you today. You'd be like, What is going on? Have you had too much coffee? What's happening? We don't use this word. But it was a word back in this day that was very common, especially for your family members.

And so it's this term of endearment. I'm not sure. I can't think off the cuff of an equivalent. It's dangerous to think off the cuff when you're in the pulpit, so I won't try to think of one. But it's that sort of word.

[ 10 : 38 ] It's the word for someone who you especially love, who is very close to you. I call my wife Lovey, so that's maybe the equivalent for us. Sorry, honey.

I didn't get permission to share that, but I hope it's okay. So beloved. Beloved is what Peter's calling. He loves these people. Because he loves them, he wants to remind them of the good news. And like I said, that's one of the most important things we can do for those whom we love. That's what's going on here. He wants to remind them of this truth about Christ. Really, all the Bible is about Jesus.

Ultimately, it all is pointing to him or from him. Jesus says in John 5, You search the Scriptures because you think that in them you have eternal life. And it is they that bear witness about me. Yet you refuse to come to me that you may have life. All the Bible is about Jesus. And so reminding each other about Jesus is really important. Now, Peter has a specific aspect of how he wants to remind them related to the core truth about Christ.

[ 11 : 34 ] He wants to remind them about this sad reality, actually, that comes alongside the truth, alongside the good news. It's somewhat of bad news. And it's that there will always be scoffers.

There has been and will be until this final day scoffers. And so he's reminding them about this idea of scoffers, that they might be aware of this reality, that they may be aware of Christ most of all, of course, but aware of scoffers that will be there.

He says, Knowing this, first of all, that scoffers will come in the last days with scoffing. They will follow their own sinful desires. These are scoffers who are following their sinful desires, these desires that are actually in all humans, this desire to do things on our own, to not live in dependence on God, to live in opposition to his ways, in either subtle ways or bold ways.

It's a problem with all of humanity. That's what Jesus came to rescue us from. But scoffers are making the choice to live by those desires, to define their motivations and what they do and say by their sinful desires.

So that's how they're characterized. They've denied God and they've pursued this. They oppose the truth. And they openly do that. They scoff at the truth.

[12:53] They ask questions in this passage to legitimize their cynicism in opposition to the truth. So Peter says in chapter 3, verse 4, they will say, Where is this promise of his coming?

For ever since the fathers fell asleep, all things are continuing as they were from the beginning of creation. Where is this supposed day that's supposed to be looming? Where is this Jesus who is supposed to be coming back?

It's just the same today as it's been always. Look around you. Stop believing in fairy tales. That's kind of what the scoffers are saying. But Peter says they willfully overlook that there's more to the story.

Certainly we can look around us at creation and assume, presume, that it's always been this way and always will be this way. There was a belief in this day in the necessity and eternity of creation that everything we see has been since the very beginning and will have to endure as it is always. This is the ultimate reality, what you can see with your senses, what you maybe can discern with your mind, and then that's it. And so they're scoffing, basically saying there's no other reality. Stop living that way and make choices that are reasonable according to what we say.

[14:09] They're scoffing. But Peter says they're deliberately, willfully overlooking that there's more to the story. There's more to the story than what they're claiming. There is a creator who has made all these things.

And if we acknowledge that there is a creator, we must acknowledge that the creator has a prerogative over his creation. This is his creation, not ours. And he is the one who has made all things and he is the one who can unmake all things if he so chooses.

And so Peter references the original creation. He says that God, that the earth was formed out of water and through water, as it explains in Genesis chapter one.

And it was formed by the word of God. So God spoke and creation was formed out of water and through water. The earth came forward and what we know came into being by God.

God made it. God created all things through water and by his word. And Peter says just as he did that, he used water and his word to bring judgment in the ancient world.

[15:19] He's speaking of the days of Noah. And if we read about that back in Genesis chapter six and following, we learn that what was going on in the earth among mankind is mankind had grown very wicked.

Mankind had followed the trajectory of scoffing and denying the Lord and defying themselves independently from God and following their worst instincts.

And it had gotten worse and worse and worse so bad that in Genesis chapter six, verse five, it says this, the Lord saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth and that every intention of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually.

It's a horrible, horrible thought that mankind, pretty much everybody, their thoughts of their hearts were only evil continually.

That's how bad it had become. And so God in his goodness and in his justice and in his divine prerogative as creator who has made all things and created all things that mankind might live in creation and image him, reflect his goodness and glory, it is his prerogative to bring judgment.

[16:37] And that's what he did. People on that day were presuming on things just as in Peter's day and our day as well. And yet God brought judgment. He has made all things.

He can unmake all things. He is God. He is good and just. And this is what the scoffers are ignoring. He did it before, Peter's saying, and he's going to do it again.

There'll be a day that is coming. This is the sad reality that there are scoffers in our world and mankind has fallen. It's what we call the fall.

We understand it from Genesis chapter 3. What happened? Mankind has fallen away from his relationship with God, proper dependence on God, proper living in fellowship with God, and imaging God and who we are.

We've fallen from that and we live in this broken state. And Romans 1 teaches us that what has happened really is the wheels have come off among mankind. It's gotten worse and worse among cultures over time.

[17:35] Mankind ultimately in this has exchanged the glory of God for the image of created things. We've exchanged worshipping God, depending on God and enjoying God and through him and dependence on him enjoying all that he's made.

We've swapped that out and we've chosen to worship and deify his creation, including ourselves, instead of him. This is what Romans 1 teaches us.

It's a terrible cosmic rebellion. Imagine that you were a wealthy and benevolent duke or duchess. You had a grand estate, beautiful estate, with manicured gardens and a big castle house thing. And you just, you loved your neighbors, and so you decided to have a party.

And you invited everyone from the county to come to your estate and just enjoy a weekend of feasting and celebrating and being together. And so you had the party and as things progressed, you were just making the rounds, just seeing how things are.

[ 18 : 39 ] And you went out in the backyard among your gardens and you noticed that there was, like, trash. People were, like, throwing discarded cups and plates everywhere.

There were, like, empty beer bottles here and there. And there was, you know, you went out in there in your pool. Someone had, like, dumped the lounge and so forth, the seats in the pool. And, like, what's going on? And then you go into the house and you're inside the house and, like, there's, like, there's discarded food on the couch, like, kind of squished into the corner of the couch. And there's, like, trash and stuff. And you're like, what's going on? You know, I had this party. I don't understand. Then you go out in the front lawn just to see what's happening there. And you notice that your car is in the middle of the front lawn and there's a donut.

Someone was doing donuts with your car on your lawn. You're like, what's going on? What, what's, this is my house. I, my grounds, I invited everyone to be here and it's getting trashed. And now let's make it a little more ridiculous even.

[ 19 : 37 ] You're there and you're trying to interact with people as well. You're trying to be hospitable. And every time you go up to somebody, you're like, hi, I'm Duke Paul. I'm glad you're here. And they just look at you and they roll their eyes and they walk away.

And you notice this happens over and over again. Like people don't want to acknowledge your presence there. What's going on? This is my house. You're here. How can you do this? And, and now let's get even more ridiculous with my illustration.

There's people who, after the weekend's over, are still in your house. And they're, they're like sleeping in the rooms and they're like using the kitchen and you don't know who they are. You're like, what's going on?

And they're, and you find out actually that they've hired a lawyer to take possession of the house from you. And like, what? What happened? I had a party. I wasn't inviting everybody to my house and this, and this is turning out this way.

And it gets even worse actually. They, this group of squatters deny your existence. They say that there's no such thing really as the Duke. It's only a, it's a myth to represent the spirit of the estate. And then they take your cat and they say, this cat is, represents the spirit of the estate.

[ 20 : 41 ] And they start, they put it on a special pillow and they have ceremonies. They walk around with the cat and they think about the wonderful spirit of the estate. Now it's really ridiculous, isn't it? But if you are familiar with Romans chapter one, it actually describes what's going on in Romans one.

And this is the reality about God's creation. It is very much a real story because we live on God's estate. He is the benevolent one who has invited us to a party of, to know him, to walk with him. And we have desecrated his place. We have denied him and we have replaced him. And we roll our eyes with the idea that somehow this is his estate.

It's that audacious. That's why I use such a ridiculous illustration to help us understand reality. This is, this is the reality of mankind. This is the reality of the scoffers. And that's what Peter's trying to get at is that he's made all this.

It's his house. And he gets to make the call on what to do with his house. And when things get out of hand, he has the right, the prerogative and the goodness to bring judgment.

[ 21 : 46 ] And he did it before and he's going to do it again. That's what he's saying here. And the scoffers are in a dangerous place because they are presuming on God.

And yet God is bringing a day of judgment when he will judge the scoffers. He will judge those who have denied him. He will judge those who have not run to him for his strength and his life for forgiveness, who have not run to Christ ultimately, but have decided to go their own way.

He will bring judgment. It'll be a just judgment. It won't be cruel. It won't be tyrannical. It will be perfectly just. And any human being who tries to stand on their own two feet on a day of judgment is

in for trouble because all of us have exchanged the glory of God for his creation.

We've all fallen short of the glory of God. We've all chosen to one degree or another, maybe subtly or boldly, to rebel against him. He is God. He is good.

And he will bring his judgment ultimately. I love how C.S. Lewis describes Aslan, the Christ figure in *The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe* when they ask, is he safe?

[ 22 : 54 ] Is this lion, Aslan, safe who represents Christ? The reply is, who said anything about safe? Of course he isn't safe, but he's good. And this is God.

He isn't safe, but he's good. And Peter tells us that the day of the Lord will come. It is coming, it will come, and he says it will come like a thief. What does that mean?

How does a thief come? Well, a thief comes when you don't expect him, right? You don't make a schedule for when the thief comes. Like, okay, come up to my house at this date and this time. He comes unexpectedly, and that's the idea.

He comes when the doors and windows are unlocked and you're not prepared, and that's what Peter is saying. This day is going to come. It's going to come when you least expect it, but it will come, and you should know about this.

It's going to come, and the reality is that the heavenly bodies will be burned up and dissolved. All of creation as we know it will be dissolved. There will be no more of what we've expected and experienced, and everything will be exposed.

[ 23 : 53 ] Every human's life, deeds, choices, thoughts, every aspect will be totally exposed before God. He's saying that explicitly. He's saying that God will justly judge all, and those who have decided to follow the scoffers and to live their own life and to walk in rebellion and not run to Him for mercy and grace will suffer judgment.

It's not a happy topic. It's not a topic that you want to hear, and among the wrong crowd, it can get you in trouble, but it wouldn't be good for me to not tell you about this.

Peter loves his listeners enough to tell them, and I love you, in Christ's name, enough to tell you so that you can be aware there is a final day of judgment coming, and all the things that we've grown so used to will be gone and exposed.

Now, there's more coming. We're going to talk about the new heavens and the new earth, but what we've known will no longer be, and God will judge, and those who choose to go their own way will be judged eternally.

They will live apart from God in what we call hell, a place of regret and darkness, utter darkness. There will be justice there.

[ 25 : 15 ] There will be nothing cruel or unusual in that. It will be a just judgment, but it will be a real one, and you don't want to be there. There's warning here in this chapter for us to be aware that this day is coming, so the question I would ask is, are you a scoffer?

Are you someone who's presumed on what you see around you and are living, feeling secure in that? Or are you someone who's impressed by scoffers, thinking they have interesting and intelligent things to say?

They might, but beware. Because behind the scoffer is somebody who's choosing to follow their sinful desires rather than depend on God and learn to grow more like Christ.

Peter is calling us to be aware of this, to know that the scoffers are in danger, and he's warning his people, don't follow them. Don't be them. Don't follow them. I was reading the story, actually just this morning, and I had read other stories about the Mayanus River Bridge in Coscob, Connecticut. Back in 1983, at 1.30 in the morning, the bridge collapsed. So this is Route 95, similar to what we saw recently in Philadelphia, but this was a large section of the bridge over the river, collapsed in the middle of the night.

[ 26 : 34 ] A couple tractor-trailers actually skidded and went over, fell in. One car went over. Then other cars were able to skid and stop and immediately got out of their car and started frantically waving at people to stop, and one car stopped, but one car accelerated, and the driver made a gesture, an obscene gesture, to those frantically waving for him to stop and accelerated over the cliff into the gap.

That's a picture of the scoffers. Peter is warning the scoffers and warning us, don't follow the scoffers because they are accelerating, making an obscene gesture at God, so to speak, and driving quickly over the edge.

There's a day coming, and so be aware. Be wise. Now, understand, too, that God takes no pleasure in the death of the wicked.

That's what Peter's talking about here in this passage. He's talking about this reality of a day being like a thousand years, and a thousand years are like a day.

He's patient, it says, because one of the things the scoffers are doing, they're saying, when is this going to happen? What about this delay? Wasn't it supposed to happen way long ago? Why? It's been 2,000 years since Christ came, so what's going on?

[ 28 : 00 ] And so Peter explains that. He wants them to understand what's going on, and it's important for us to understand this and understand the heart of God and what he calls us to as well. Let me just look at it here so I can follow it.

He says in verse 8, but do not overlook this one fact, beloved, that with the Lord, one day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years are as one day. Now, you've maybe heard that expression before, and what it's basically saying is that in God's mind, there's not necessarily any difference between a thousand years and a day or a day and a thousand years, so God's sense of time is not our sense of time.

That's what it's teaching, but there's a particular aspect to it here where he's getting at something. He's not just saying, you know, time is different with God. Yes, it is. God has different priorities than the clock that we might have as our priority.

What is his priority here? What is the other thing? What's he more interested in than time in this passage? It's not so much when the schedule is, it's something else, right?

The Lord is not slow to fulfill his promise, Peter says, as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing that any should perish, but that all should reach repentance.

[ 29 : 26 ] That's why there's a delay. That's why it's been thousands of years. Because God has a higher priority than the schedule. People.

And he desires that none should perish. He doesn't want anybody going over the edge, scoffer or not. He wants everyone to come to repentance, to run to him for the forgiveness he's provided richly in Christ.

He took on flesh. God came down, born as a baby, lived humbly, walked among us, fulfilled all righteousness, loved his father, loved others, taught truth, lived this amazing life, God himself, in the flesh, as a full human.

Because he desired that none should perish, he desired that you should not perish. He didn't want you going over the cliff. He knew that day is coming, and he's made provision for you.

That beautiful, righteous life of his, he willingly offered up on the cross in your place. Bearing your sin, my sin.

[ 30 : 35 ] Bearing my scoffing, and I could tell lots of stories about my scoffing in my life. Bearing that in himself on the cross. Dying in my place, your place. So that justice for true evil, true wrong against God and one another, could be satisfied.

And then he rose again on the third day, victorious over your sin and over death. He rose again, he's ascended, he's reigning now, and he's waiting patiently to return for that final day.

This is God's desire that none should perish, that you shouldn't perish, that your neighbors shouldn't perish, that your family members shouldn't perish, that your coworkers shouldn't perish, but find life in Christ, find forgiveness in him.

He's patient and waiting. And so we need to understand that the day is looming, it could happen tomorrow, but there's something delaying it, and that's God is waiting patiently that none should perish.

I'm going to talk a little bit more about that in a bit. I think the thing we need to hear, I think the thing we need to hear, though, is the day looms, and yet provision has been made, so let's not procrastinate.

[ 31 : 47 ] If you have not put your faith in Christ, do that now, because you don't know when the day will come. But the day will come. Peter makes it clear. The day of judgment is coming when the universe, as we know it, will be dissolved and transformed, and all mankind will answer for their lives.

What should we do? That's the next question. What should we do? He will say in verse 11, and following, since all these things are thus to be dissolved, what sort of people ought you to be?

You see, the knowledge of that final day changes our lives. We know the future. We know the future. We know what's coming. Can you imagine what you would do if somehow you were able to go back in time, and somehow, let's just say bear with me in these thought experiments.

I think they'll illustrate things. So say you were able to go back in time to 1930 Germany. What's going on in 1930 in Germany? The Nazis are starting to rise.

And you go there knowing what you know now, right? What would you do? Hitler is not yet in power, but his power is growing. He's not been elected yet, but the Nazi party is growing.

[ 33 : 01 ] You are hearing, say you're fluent in German, of course. You're hearing the rhetoric, and you're seeing through it, right? You know. And you know that actually within eight, nine years, most of the German citizens will be persuaded by that rhetoric and will be faithful to the Nazi party.

You know that's coming, and you know, more importantly, that what will come with this reign of terror will be the death of six million Jews, right? Seventy million war dead.

And you're there in 1930. You know the future. You're going to do something, right? Now, I know we're limited, but you would find something to do. At least your Jewish friends, you would tell them what's coming and try to get them out of the country, right?

You might get involved in politics and try to expose things and campaign. Whatever it might be, you're going to do something with that knowledge because you know the future. You know it's coming. You can't help but be motivated by it.

Similarly, for the final day, you do know the future. You know that judgment day is coming. And therefore, we do something about it. We live our lives differently in light of the final day.

[ 34 : 15 ] And there are all sorts of things that we can do. And Peter's getting that here, getting at that here in this passage. And he says, what sort of people ought you to be in lives of holiness and godliness waiting for and hastening the coming of the day of God.

So what should you do? What sort of people ought you to be in lives of holiness and godliness? He says first, a life of holiness. What does holiness mean? That can become a religious word sometimes that we miss.

It just simply means being set apart for God. So it's a life of holiness. In other words, I don't mess around with distractions that are going to get me off track from this ultimate reality. I'm going to live my life in knowledge that judgment day is coming.

I'm going to depend on God because I need his strength and I'm going to live to help others in light of that final day. I'm going to live a life of holiness set apart for him and his truth and his ways. And what does godliness mean?

Godliness really is the lifestyle that comes with that. It's who we are personally and our practices in light of that. I'm going to make sure that every morning I get time in the word of God and I pray because I know I can't do the day without him and I know the day, the ultimate day is coming so I want to live a life of godliness and dependence on him.

[ 35 : 20 ] So that's what Peter is getting at. He wants us to live that life of godliness and holiness. And then he says something really amazing actually.

Waiting for and hastening the coming of the day of God. Waiting for and hastening. We get the waiting part, right?

We know it's coming, we're waiting for it, we're expecting it, but hastening? How can you hasten the day? Well actually he tells us how earlier, right?

Because why is the day delaying? The day is delaying because God is waiting that none should perish. God wants all to come to know him. He wants to work.

He wants the good news of Christ, the reality of Christ to go out to the whole world. He's told us that, right? When Jesus rose and gave his final instructions, what did he say?

[ 36 : 20 ] Go therefore, all authority in heaven and earth has been given to me. I have overcome sin and death and I now preside over all things as the ultimate human, as God in the flesh. Go therefore, and make disciples of all peoples, all nations.

Of course that means those in your neighborhood, but it means to the ends of the earth. And he says elsewhere in Matthew, then the end will come. That's what Peter's talking about.

That's how you hasten the day. You hasten the day by depending on him, drawing on his strength. We're going to talk about that in the close, but drawing on his strength, living an exemplary life by grace, loving your neighbors and telling them the good news and helping them to understand there's a bridge that's down and it's looming ahead.

And yet there's a solution. And you pray, as you guys do, I'm sure, that God will work in their lives. And you go to the nations who don't yet know.

Because God's heart is for them. That's who he's waiting for. Your neighbors and those among the nations.

[ 37 : 32 ] He's desiring that none should perish. That all should come to know him and certainly all peoples, all people groups. There are about 8 billion people in the world and just a little over 3 billion of those have no opportunity whatsoever to hear the good news of Jesus.

None at all. They don't know any Christians and many of them have no idea who Jesus is at all. God is waiting for those 3 billion and their villages and their ethnic groups to hear the good news because he desires that they wouldn't perish but be saved.

Recently I got to read a letter written to a man I know who served on the mission field by somebody in a neighboring tribe to his friend.

His friend had gone to the Eteri people in Papua New Guinea so you can look this story up. He had labored for 20 years to translate the Bible and to live a life of dependence on Jesus before these people to love them truly.

This tribe was in deep darkness. Great darkness. Demonization. Demonic activity. Murder.

[ 39 : 00 ] Regular murder. Regular rape. Actually from what I understand every woman in the tribe had been raped. Deceit. Warfare. And disease marked this tribe. This is how they lived as this man came to them and he labored for 20 years.

Translated the Bible for them. Loved them. Explained the good news as best he could. And around 20 years of labor resulted by God's grace and a breakthrough in this tribe.

They believed the good news. They believed it for themselves. They understood it was for them and the whole tribe put their faith in Christ. There's videos you can see of them celebrating when they received the Bible and it transformed this tribe.

Radical transformation. Forgiveness. Love. Godliness. It just totally changed the tribe and the other tribes around the area who spoke different languages that's how it works in Papua New Guinea because of the ruggedness.

They spoke different languages. They started hearing about what happened in this tribe and they realized even though they were not followers of Christ they understood their own darkness and they wrote letters to my friend asking him to help.

[ 40 : 06 ] This is one letter. It's a real letter from a man named Wapia. And he writes, What's going on? Where is our help?

Have you forgot about us? We have sinned now and haven't forgot about wanting a missionary. We carry a huge heavy constantly about this. We carry this heavy because we fear for our lives.

We know the Bible says you should come and tell us. Us dark ones need it. How will we go to God's place if not? Only those who know will go. How will we know if no one teaches us? That's the bottom line of my worry.

We want a missionary now to give us God's talk. We're Piusanaki, Sinal Village. My friend couldn't go. He had other things he had to do.

God is waiting for Wapia and his tribe. That's why Judgment Day hasn't come. Wapia needs somebody to go there and there's many like him.

[ 41 : 11 ] I don't know what God's call is on your life but it might be that you would be the one to go there or somewhere else. That's how we hasten the day.

That's what Peter is talking about. We hasten the day by being diligent about the work he's called us to do and Peter further tells us in verse 14 to be diligent to be found by him without spot or blemish and at peace.

This day is coming and so you want to be ready. You want to be there without spot or blemish and at peace. What does that mean? Does that mean we have to be perfect? I'm sure that's a scary thought as I even I said that without spot or blemish I'm in a lot of trouble.

Well biblically when it talks about this it doesn't mean perfection. You're not going to be perfect without sin until you go to be with Jesus. But being without spot or blemish means being someone who doesn't allow sin to rule and run your life.

You don't stay dirty when you're dirty you get clean quickly. That's that's how a believer actually is distinguished from somebody who's not following Jesus but claiming to.

[ 42 : 18 ] The one who's following Jesus will get dirty along with the other but they'll run to the light. So John says it this way if we say we have fellowship with him while we walk in darkness we lie and do not practice the truth.

But if we walk in the light as he is in the light we have fellowship with one another and the blood of Jesus' son cleanses us from all sin. The difference is that you run to the light.

That's how you get yourself ready. And so if you're in the darkness right now as a believer you don't want to be found in the darkness if the day were to come today. You want to be one who keeps on running to the light.

And you do that by being here that's a wonderful step. You do that by talking to others who you can trust and tell them your struggle so you can pray for each other. We all struggle but we want to run to the light.

We want to live in this lifestyle of dependence on him getting clean and receiving his power. We want to be ready. We want to be aware. We want to be ready.

[ 43 : 18 ] And finally and more quickly we want to be strengthened but probably most importantly. Peter continues in verse 15 through 18 speaking about this idea that really the idea of being strengthened.

He mentions the apostle Paul. He says to count the patience of our Lord as salvation. And so the patience of God. We live in this time he's waiting. It's for the sake of salvation.

It's for the sake of our own salvation. He wants us to be saved and to grow in our salvation. He wants us to grow in Christ. He wants us to extend that salvation to others. So count our lives this way.

And then he mentions he talks about Paul in there. And then returns to the scoffers again because he says that there are certain people that take the hard things about Paul that are hard to understand.

And there are some deep theological truths in Paul's writings. Wonderful ones. But can be hard to understand. And he says that those who are ignorant and unstable twist those things. They take those teachings and they twist them really to the wrong purpose.

[ 44 : 20 ] Instead of the purpose being learning more about the wonder of grace and the goodness of God and depending on Jesus and producing a life like Jesus, they twist it for other reasons.

Probably there are libertines who take the idea of grace to mean you can do whatever you want. Don't worry about it. You're forgiven. Do whatever you want. They twist it. And Peter says don't fall for that. That's another type of scoffing that scoffs and misunderstands the intent of all theology. The intent of all theology is to know God and to live in his grace and walk in his ways. So don't get destabilized is what Peter is saying. Instead do what?

Grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. That's what it's about. Grow in the grace. The grace that we have in Christ is amazing.

You'll never finish understanding all the wonders that God would die in your place. That he loves you. He's loved you from eternity. That he keeps you. That he empowers you. That he uses you.

[ 45 : 24 ] That he forgives you freely all the time. That he's with you. He'll see you to the end. All these wonders of grace are things to explore. We're to grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.

To know God in the flesh and who he is. More and more. There are some wonderful books on this. I'm reading a book called Deeper. Is it Gavin Ortlund?

Or Dane Ortlund? By Dane Ortlund. Helping me to grow in the grace and knowledge of the Lord. That's what Peter wants them to do. He wants them to, he's finishing the letter really with this emphasis. To grow in the grace and knowledge of the Lord.

Let your life be nourished by the grace and knowledge of Christ. He said later, I'm sorry, earlier in the letter, he's talked about all that we have. He says in verse 3 of chapter 1, his divine power has granted to us all things that pertain to life and godliness through the knowledge of him who called us to his own glory and excellence.

So he's saying earlier that you have all these things you need in Christ, so grow in the grace and knowledge of the Lord. We need nourishment. It's not enough simply to know that the final day is coming.

[ 46 : 29 ] Yes, it's really important, but you need strength. You need grace to live each day. And so Peter wants to finish with this. He's emphasizing growing in the grace and knowledge, being

nourished by Christ.

I'm sure many of you know what lembas bread is, right? Anyone know what lembas bread is? Because I'll skip the illustration if you don't. Lembas bread is in the Lord of the Rings, this kind of magical bread that the elves make.

Originally it comes from the Valar, which is kind of like these archangels, and we won't get into that. But anyhow, this amazing bread, one little wafer of it is all that a full-grown man needs for a whole day for energy.

It's like this power bread in the storyline. And it's a picture, I think, of the power bread we have, the manna we've been giving. And John 6 says it this way, Jesus says to them, I am the bread of life. Whoever comes to me shall not hunger, and whoever believes in me shall never thirst. Christ, my brothers and sisters, you have probably many days ahead of you until that final day, and you need each day to nourish yourself in Christ, to eat of this bread that is Christ himself given for you, to find your life in him, to walk with him, and therefore to continue to be aware, to be ready, to hasten his coming, and to be strengthened by him.

[ 47 : 58 ] Peter finishes with this verse that's so important, which I'll finish with. He says, but grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, to him be the glory both now and today of eternity.

Amen. Amen. Let me pray. Lord, we thank you for this wonderful chapter and how it changes our lives, and I pray, Lord, that you would help us to remember these truths, and Lord, you would lead us in your ways.

I pray for each one here, Lord, to buy your spirit, to hear your call to apply your word in some specific way to our lives. Guide us in that. Glorify your name, we pray.

Amen. Amen.