

Live Like Jesus is Coming Again (Part 1)

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[0 : 00] Beloved, 2 Peter. Chapter 3.

Chapter 3.

Is coming again. That's pretty much the message of scripture, isn't it? Live like Jesus is coming again. If you'll pick it up with me, I'll start reading in verse 10.

But the day of the Lord will come like a thief. In which the heavens will pass away with a roar. And the elements will be destroyed with intense heat.

And the earth and its works will be burned up. Since all these things are to be destroyed in this way. What sort of people ought you to be in holy conduct and godliness?

[1 : 30] Looking for and hastening the coming day of God. Because of which the heavens will be destroyed by burning. And the elements will melt with intense heat.

But according to his promise. We are looking for new heavens. And a new earth. In which righteousness dwells. Therefore, beloved.

Since you look for these things. Be diligent to be found by him in peace. Spotless and blameless. And regard the patience of our Lord as salvation.

Just as also our beloved brother Paul. According to the wisdom given him. Wrote to you. As also in all his letters. Speaking in them of these things.

In which are some things hard to understand. Which the untaught and unstable distort. As they do also the rest of the scriptures.

[2 : 32] To their own destruction. You therefore, beloved. Knowing this beforehand. Be on your guard. So that you are not carried away.

By the error of unprincipled men. And fall from your own steadfastness. But grow in the grace. And knowledge.

Of our Lord and Savior. Dear Jesus Christ. To him be the glory. Both now. And to the day of eternity. Amen.

Well friends. We are coming to the close. Of Peter's final letter. To God's people. Before he is going to be killed. For his faith.

I have told you that he is very aware. That that day is almost on him. And as he faces death. Peter's great concern. For his fellow Christians. Is that they would nurture.

[3 : 30] A lifestyle. Not simply a profession. But a lifestyle. Based on an eternal perspective. On the end of all things.

This should be a defining factor. For how we live our lives. As Christians. Peter has taught us. That our entire universe.

All that we currently know. About what this world is. And how it operates. All of that is moving toward a catastrophic end.

And a new beginning. All of it. A terrible day of judgment is coming. And a great day of salvation. Is coming. Your eternity.

- Hangs in the balance. And so Peter is calling us. Think on that reality. Let that reality.
- [4 : 27] Define the way that you think about. How you live your life now. Every single human being. Will be made to stand before Jesus Christ.
- And give an account. Of his or her life. To him. So that those. Those who trust in themselves. Those who live for themselves.
- Closing themselves off to God's forgiveness. In Christ alone. Those people will suffer judgment. And an eternal punishment in hell. Very real. Those who trust in Jesus.
- Those who trust in Jesus. And persevere. In living holy lives. Will be saved. They will enjoy a new heaven. And a new earth.
- Where he tells us. Righteousness dwells forever. It's very sobering. Very real. Knowing this.
- [5 : 25] Beforehand. He says. We need to order our lives. In response to God. To his purposes. For the end times.
- We are actually called. To be a people. Who live our lives now. In light of what we know. Will be the end. It should make all the difference.
- In the way that we think about life. And the way that we approach. How we prioritize our lives. So as Peter closes his letter. Four commands.
- Come to light. Four imperatives. From God. And these four commands. Can be kind of. Reverse engineered. If you will. To compel us.
- In four responses. To God. And it's all based on. Jesus coming again. Only believers. Can respond to God.
- [6 : 22] In life. In the four ways. We're going to be talking about. This Sunday and next. Next Sunday God willing. Is when I'll close the letter out. Only believers. Can make the most of our time.
- On earth. For the glory of God. And that's what matters. And only believers. Can and must care about. Living for God.
- Now. In light of the end. Folks. No one else. Is going to pick up that baton. And run with it. You and I. Have been uniquely created.
- As individual people. To gather together. As God's family. And live out. The glory of God. In our sphere of influence. In life. And we gather together.
- To encourage each other. In doing just that. Living for the glory. Of almighty God. In all that we say and do. So I want to ask you. At the outset.
- [7 : 17] How do you go about. Your daily life. Your lifestyle. And in what ways. Are you intentionally. Creating opportunities. To carry forward.
- The glory of Jesus Christ. In the way that you go about. Your life. How much. Does knowing the end. Influence the way. That you live. Moment by moment.
- Each day. Are you. Are you striving. To put it at the forefront. Of your mind. So that the impression. Of the end. Is helping you. Judge.
- What should I make priority. It's not a fly by the seat. Of your pants. Proposition is it. It is a very. Intentional.
- Called out way. Of thinking about life. Now. In terms of how that. Life is all going to come. To an end. Under the purposes.
- [8 : 09] And plans of almighty God. So that every single. Human being. Will stand before the Lord. To give an account. Every one of us. Believing and non-believing. In all of that.

Peter is telling us. We need to live. In light. Of the fact. That Jesus Christ. Is coming again. That's what matters. Live it.

Now. Remember also. Friends. That Peter. Peter. Emphasizes. All of this. And he emphasizes. This from the previous. Context. And the.

End of things. Is God's purpose. For everything. That's what he wants us. To zero in on. The end of things. Is God's purpose. For everything. Everything.

Is moving. Toward that. Particular. End. The end of the story. Is the whole point. Of the story. We said. A couple of sermons. Ago. Jesus.

[9 : 04] Jesus. Is coming again. So. First of all. Be. Diligent. This is the first imperative. Or first command. Of four. In this passage.

Moving from 14. Down. To the end. Of the book. Verse 18. Be. Diligent. If you'll look with me. At verse 14. Therefore.

Beloved. Since you look. For these things. Be diligent. To be found by him. In peace. Spotless. And blameless. So in the new. American standard. Translation.

Verse 14. Begins with the word. Therefore. Therefore. Grounds you and I. In the previous. Content. Each.

Of the four. Imperatives. Each of the four. Commands. That Peter's going. To deal with. Are based. On these. Truths. About Jesus. Coming again. That Peter.

[10 : 00] Has been elaborating. Because God. Is going to destroy. The earth. And the universe. In catastrophic. Judgment. And then.

Remake the heavens. And the earth. For his covenant. People. Be. Diligent. Be. Diligent. He uses. This wonderful.

Tender. Appellation. Beloved. Therefore. Beloved. Beloved. Is. Agape. Toy. I want you to see it up here.

It's the plural. Form. And it. Means. Loved ones. He's used this. Several times. Before. He'll use it again. Before he closes out his letter. Oh.

Beloved. Oh. Loved. Ones. This is God's. Sacrificial. Love. That was. Demonstrated. For you and I. On the cross. This is agape.

[10 : 54] And we are the agape toy. We are those loved ones of God. Purchased by his love on the cross. That term of endearment.

Beckons our hearts to warmly reflect on the goodness of God to us. In that Jesus took the wrath of God on himself. That was meant for you and I.

Why? So beloved is a term of endearment that helps us remember and reflect on. We're going to escape that judgment. We've been delivered from it.

We stand in a different place in our relationship to God. All by his mercy. It is God's goodness to us. We are God's personal loved ones.

And because he cherishes you and cherishes myself in Jesus Christ. Look what he says. We can eagerly look for these things.

[11 : 54] Can you imagine if you're an unbeliever and you're hearing the messages we've been preaching over the last few weeks about how the world is going to end and some of the details about the terrible judgment.

Do you suppose as an unbeliever you're looking forward to that time? It's terrifying. And yet what he tells us as his beloved as his cherished ones we are to eagerly in the text look for these things.

And so once again I'm asking you are you being diligent to structure and order your life in a way that you are actually looking for these things.

They're at the forefront of your mind. You're being defined by this forward looking eternity that you know God's going to bring in the way of an end to all things.

Now that can either really depress you or it can bring you hope. What's the difference? The difference is your relationship to God through Jesus Christ.

[13 : 00] That's what makes all the difference. And how we understand what Peter is giving us to look forward to. We are not only hear this now please.

We are not only not afraid. But we are also hastening the day when Jesus will come again to receive us to himself and relieve you and I of this dreadful fight against sin and death.

There are many joys in life aren't there? There are many things that you and I by God's grace can enjoy and embrace and take hope in and comfort in.

We can say boy that was fun. We can delight in friends and family and events that happen. And here's something else we know. We know that this life can kick us in the teeth.

It can knock the wind out of us in a way that makes it sometimes even difficult to get up off the ground as it were. And so what is it that helps us through this?

[14 : 04] What is it that helps us gain a perspective to persevere? Not just with drudgery. Not just with well like we're some kind of a martyr. But with joy and with hope and with peace.

What is it that does that? Well folks we long for deliverance. While there are so many truths that help define our lives as Christians.

Peter's concern is that we base the priorities of godly living. Hear me now on a mindful commitment to the second coming. You'll hear this repeated over and over again as he closes out.

It's very challenging to me personally as I read this part of scripture and I meditate on it. I think about it. I take it into my heart that here is a man who failed Jesus so miserably.

And then was restored by Jesus to life and ministry. And now he spent several decades pouring himself out in service to Jesus Christ.

[15 : 07] And he knows. Now get this. This man knows after that many decades of faithful, faithful service and sacrifice to Jesus.

Jesus. He's about to be murdered. How's that even fair? I mean can I go out in a way that I don't get my head chopped off?

That's what I get for three decades of faithful service to Jesus? You see what I... Oh yeah you can take that kind of an attitude. That's not where Peter is at all. Peter's greatest concern is not for himself.

His heart still continues to pour out loving concern for God's people. And he's writing to them saying, yeah I know I'm going to lose my life. But my concern is for you.

Are you going to live your life now and make the most of your life now? Because you know how it's all going to end. Will you allow that to help define you and prioritize life for you?

[16 : 15] This is what Peter is challenging us with. Mindful commitment to the second coming. And so here's the question. How can we be faithful to this mindset?

The answer? Be diligent. Be diligent. Let me ask you this way. If you were going to teach your children.

And if you don't have kids. Maybe you're thinking of teaching someone else's children. Or grandchildren. Or whatever. If you were going to teach someone. What it means to be diligent in life.

In some endeavor or effort. What do you teach them? What do you say to your kids to help them understand the concept of being diligent in life.

Or diligent in some aspect of life. What would you say? How would you communicate that to them? Just think about that. Diligent is from the word *spudazo*.

[17 : 19] It means be eager. Be zealous. Show keen interest. Show intense desire. It's actually used in a couple of instances for an impatient expectancy.

So this is a person who has a very personal, intentional, deliberate desire to be invested.

This is how we talk about when we say, oh, I'm full in. I'm full in. Everything about me. All of my resources. This is, I am totally, totally focused and committed.

Be diligent. Be personally invested in these realities for your life. Now, Peter's used this word and this concept before.

If you'll look with me at chapter 1, verse 5. I want to ground this in what he's already been saying to these people. Because as he comes to the close of his letter, he's tying it all together.

[18 : 22] Pulling it together. Chapter 1, verse 5. Now, for this very reason also, since the Lord has delivered you, made you a partaker of divine nature, given you all of these precious promises, delivered you from corruption that is in the world by lustful desires.

Now, for this very reason also, applying all diligence. In your faith, supply moral excellence. And then so forth. Same word, same concept.

Apply a focused diligence to living out the godly virtues of 5 through 7. Be intentionally invested.

Be focused. Pour the resources of your life into these very things. Give everything that you have and are to these things. And you will not waste your life.

Read them with me. Look at this from verse 5 down. For this very reason also then, apply all diligence in your faith. Supply moral excellence.

[19 : 29] In your moral excellence, knowledge. Knowledge, self-control. Self-control, perseverance. And in your perseverance, godliness. This is where Peter's really going to zero in.

And in your godliness, brotherly kindness. And in your brotherly kindness, love. For if these qualities are yours and are increasing. This is the concept that he's dealing with right now as he ends his letters.

The idea, do you own these? Are these things discernible in your life? Have you given yourself over to these things? And are they increasing? Are you persevering in them?

They render you neither useless nor unfruitful. In the true knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. That means saving knowledge. That means the knowledge of him. Not just that he's God.

Not just that he's in heaven. Not just that he's coming back. But he's your Lord. He's your Savior. It's a personal understanding of him. As you look to him for the forgiveness of your sins.

[20 : 29] So this is what I'm trying to tell you. In all of this. In what he's saying here. In this list of virtues. Peter is calling us. To a diligent effort.

Of living in a life of godliness. Demonstrating the character. Of Jesus. Day to day. Moment to moment.

He uses this same word. Again in chapter 1 verse 10. Therefore brethren. Be all the more.

Diligent. To make certain. About his calling. And choosing you. For as long as you practice these things. That's 5.

Down through 8. As long as you're practicing these things. You will never stumble. That is you will never lose sight of living for Christ. For in this way.

- [21 : 26] The entrance into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Will be abundantly supplied to you. Therefore I will always be ready to remind you of these things. Even though you already know them. And have been established in the truth. Which is present with you. In verse 10. This is the same verb. As in. Chapter 1 verse 5. It has a similar theme. So friends. Diligently persevering. The. In these virtues. Over the course of your Christian life. Listen to this. Provides entrance into heaven. I'm going to say that again. Because we need to do something with that. Diligently persevering. And pursuing these virtues. That we just read off. Over the course of your Christian life. Provides you with entrance into heaven.
- [22 : 26] You say wait a minute now. Whoa. Slow down. That sounds like works righteousness. That sounds like I'm able to work my way into God's favor. And then into heaven. If I do these things I'm in. Well why does he say it this way. Why does he tell us this. Just like that. Because only. People filled with the Holy Spirit. Can live like this. Day to day to day. Given the trials. Challenges of this planet. Given your own sinfulness. And selfishness. And pride. And greed. All the things that you fight against. The only way that you can persevere. In these kind of Christ-like values. Is if Christ lives in you. So as you and I are able to live out these virtues. Not in perfection. But day to day to day. They become evidences. Proofs. That you and I are in him. And then where do we go with all of that?
- [23 : 24] Well let me explain it. This is Peter's same emphasis. As in chapter 3 verse 14. Where we're doing our work now. You and I are to make a diligent pursuit. Of being godly people. That sounds like Christianity 101. Because it is. As we get closer to Jesus coming again. Be diligent to be found by him in peace. Spotless and blameless. In other words. You and I. Have a responsibility. In nurturing. These virtues of Christ-like character. In our daily lives. That's our responsibility. It's our privilege. You're being helped to know. Where to apply. Your keen. Eager. Intense. Efforts. Now I'm grateful for that. Because my mind can go all over the place.
- [24 : 25] I can get involved in all kinds of things. I can think that this thing over here. Is a wonderful idea. And this thing over here. Is a wonderful idea. And six months later. Look back and think. Jeff what were you thinking? Well I wasn't thinking like Jesus. In that moment apparently. Peter's helping us with that folks. He's helping us to know. Where to put our effort. Your ability. Your ability. To live this way. Is a privilege of God's grace. In your life. So don't take it for granted folks. Diligently make the most of it. Given the hard truth. Of all things. Coming to a disastrous end. And even with God's people. Being rescued from it. Peter wants us to live. In the soul calming peace. Of God's love for us. Now given. Given the reality. Of the difficulties.
- [25 : 21] And challenges of life. The stressors of life. The surprises of life. The hardships. The downers. Scripture can tell us. So many different things. About how to face that. Here is the apostle Peter. Closing out this final letter. Before his death. And what he wants you to take. Comfort in. Most. Is that Jesus is coming again. Now. Let me ask you.

In all reality. You. You have a problem. In your life. It's a serious one. You're struggling. And so you say. Jeff. Can I come in. And talk with you. Sure.

Absolutely. Come in. Let's sit down together. I listen. We go back and forth. We talk about what's going on. And with all love. And seriousness.

[26 : 17] And not trying to be trite. At all. I say to you. You know what's going to make the difference. For you in this. Jesus is coming. Again. Are you going to leave.

That meeting. And everything in your life. Is going to be changed. And better. And. Oh. There you go. That. That just made everything. Fine. I don't have these issues anymore.

That's not what he's talking about. Is it? He's talking about Jesus coming again. Being real for you. In the worst of life. Because he wants you to be reminded.

That the worst of this life. Isn't what this life's all about. The worst of this life. Is about looking for the life to come. And the worst of this life.

Reminds you and I. That we have a. Wonderful. Eternal existence. Waiting for us. With Jesus. And this will all be over with. In the blink of an eye. Now that can make a difference.

[27 : 18] If you let it. And that's what he wants us to do. The soul peace. That he brings. As we live in a troubled world.

Jesus is our peace. You don't have to look any further than Jesus. To find the peace. That you and I want.

For living in the trials of this life. Jesus is our peace. Not the changing of all your circumstances. So that it's all working out. The way you want it. That's so unrealistic.

You'll be a very frustrated person. If you try to live like that. Listen to what Jesus said. Listen to what he said. I'll put it up here. So you can read along with me. Do not let your heart be troubled.

Believe in God. Now what if I stopped right there. Took this off. And we sat down for counseling. And I said. Do not let your heart be troubled. Believe in God. Go in peace child.

[28 : 18] You say. That's it. Well it's a good place to start. And then we'll talk some more. And then I'll probably end there too. Do not let your heart be troubled.

Believe in God. Believe also in me. Peace I leave with you. My peace I give to you.

Not as the world gives do I give to you. Do not let your heart be troubled. Nor let it be fearful. These things I have spoken to you. So that in me you may have peace.

In me you may have peace. In the world you have tribulation. But take courage. I have overcome the world. I have overcome the world.

In me you have overcoming. In me you have peace. Peace. I have overcome the world. In me you have. In me you have peace. When Jesus comes. And when we stand to give an account.

[29 : 19] You and I want to be spotless and blameless. In what we present to him. In the way of the life that we lived. He has made us spotless and blameless. In his righteousness.

Nothing can change that or take away from that. Positionally. You and I are fixed in the spotless righteousness of Jesus. Amen. Now what you and I want to do is live lives of gratitude where we are wanting to, at the end, present to him a life lived in spotless and blameless gratitude to him.

I want to live a holy life as an offering of gratitude back to Jesus and present that to him when I stand before him at the end. I hope that's your heart. He deserves that from you and from me.

He deserves nothing less in terms of all that he's given you and I. That's what Peter's talking about. He's not talking about you and I making ourselves spotless and blameless.

He's talking about us taking the spotless, blameless life imputed to us by Jesus Christ and making the most of it in the way that we daily live out that righteousness. And offering that to God is a gift of our thanks, our gratitude, our love.

[30 : 36] Do you have a testimony of living in grievous sin before you trusted in Jesus and began to live the Christian life?

Some of us do. Not all of us. Some of us were saved, like my wife, at a very, very young age. So there was a limited amount of sin that a six or eight year old commits.

It's still sin. But then some of us, like me, move into adulthood and living for ourselves. We can get ourselves in all kinds of terrible trouble.

Living in sin. Do you have a testimony like that of living in grievous sin before you were a Christian? Do you have a reputation? Do you have a reputation? Do you know you in a certain way by your lifestyle?

Well, Peter addresses that. People who knew you then and see your life now might marvel at the transformation in your lifestyle, your attitude, your actions.

[31 : 46] Right? You with me? That's what Peter's talking about in this passage. He's talking about the transformed life that you and I are living as evidence of the transformation he's made in our heart.

And we're giving evidence to that in the way that we live. We're living in light of the end as a gift of God's grace back to him. That's how we want to live.

You are living a Christ-like life then from true love and devotion to Jesus. Now, friends, again, you're not, listen, you're not sinless in your daily life, but you are living to show Jesus your love for him and you're doing that eagerly and enthusiastically.

That's the diligence. You're really giving your highest best for living for Jesus in that wonderful love and gratitude for what he's given to you and done for you.

Your godliness, your Christ-likeness, give your soul a peace that you genuinely belong to God. The explanation for you being able to live a life like that is that I'm really in the Lord.

[33 : 05] And that calms your soul and brings peace to you. I'm in the Lord. I'm in the Lord. The only way I can explain that I'm growing in my love for what Jesus loves is that Jesus lives in me.

And that brings you comfort. That brings you a sense of God's peace. You truly are his beloved. His cherished one. In contrast to the fraudulent, blemished lives of deceived pretenders.

And we have that. We have that in our world. We have that in our churches. There are those who are giving evidence of loving Jesus through a life of Christ-like character.

Right. These people are learning to love who and what God loves. People ask me, Jeff, what is a good test from Scripture for me to use about whether or not I'm really in the Lord, whether or not I'm making just a profession and I'm fooling myself and I'm deceived, or I'm really a Christian and I'm really walking in the Lord.

Well, that's the key right there. Are you walking in the Lord? In other words, are you in your life increasing in love for who and what God loves?

[34 : 29] Are you growing to love who and what God loves? Is that becoming more precious to you? Is that more of the motivation and desire for why you get up every morning?

I'm learning to love God. I'm learning to love Christ. I'm learning to walk by the Spirit. I'm learning to love the Word of God. I'm learning to love God's people.

This is what God loves. Now, friends, please, as I look you in the eye, if you're sitting there right now and saying, Jeff, I don't know, I'm pretty laissez-faire about all that stuff. I mean, listen, coming to church and reading the Bible.

All right. But if that's not all because you love Jesus, you're missing the point. Don't miss the point. He's the point. Greg and I, we have such a burden for this.

We just don't want anybody on our watch to end up standing before the Lord at the end time and Jesus say, depart from me. I never knew you. You person of lawlessness. Yet you, you the whole time, you think you're junk.

[35 : 35] Well, Lord, Lord, didn't I do this and this and this and this and this? Depart from me. I never knew you. You didn't belong to me. You didn't belong to me. We don't want that.

Peter's giving us what we can hold on to as evidence of true, genuine salvation in the Lord Jesus Christ. People who are living for Christ are learning to love who and what God loves.

In other words, folks, look, they're committed to a lifestyle. Now, hear these words. I chose them carefully. They are committed to a lifestyle of showing the openness, holiness, gentleness, and wisdom that Jesus showed during his lifetime.

People who love the Lord like this and walk with the Lord, they are not closed off people who are trying to keep you as far away or as arm's length as they possibly can.

You'll never know the truth about me. There are things and they live with that barrier. Now, that's pretense. That's a pretender.

[36 : 47] I did that. I made a profession in Christ when I was about 16 years old because that's what the preacher told me to do who came to my house.

I got baptized two weeks later and all through my high school years, I lived for Jeff. I chased sin. Nothing in my life changed. I was a pretender.

I went to church. I showed up for studies. I sat there and listened to everything that was being said politely, respectfully. Sometimes I even prayed.

Now, I'll be candid with you. I prayed prayers like this driving home. Lord, Lord, if what I've been doing is wrong, find some way to let me know.

You better be careful praying stuff like that. And I prayed it weekend after weekend after weekend. Lord, do you know what I knew?

[37 : 46] that was wrong. I shouldn't be doing that. I didn't have a heart to change because I didn't have a heart for Christ.

Jesus didn't live in me, so nothing changed. But I prayed and I went to church and you know what I did, friends? I hid.

I hid the real Jeff from all those people and from my mom and my dad, even my friends. That's a pretender. That's not somebody loving Jesus and loving who and what Jesus loves.

And that is very dangerous. God forbid if I had died in an automobile accident or something had happened to me at that time, I'd have been plunged straight into the abyss.

For the genuine disciples of Jesus, Peter's words offer us reassurance, hope, and peace. But then, then, there are people Peter contrasts with believers.

[39 : 01] Those who are like the mockers and deceivers and their followers. they are, quote, stains and blemishes reveling in their deceptions.

That's me. That was me at that time in my life. I was a stain and a blemish against the Lord reveling in my deceptions. That's chapter 2, verse 13.

These are people who profess faith in Christ, but God knows them as frauds. Don't be deceived in that, beloved. People who live like this, God knows they're frauds.

They are deceived into a life of prideful pretense, secret greed, and hypocritical falsehood. For these people, Peter's words are a wake-up call for the terrible judgment that awaits them at the end.

And then, of course, friends, Peter's second command supports and follows on the first. Jesus is coming again, so respond diligently and this one, and this, I worded this a little bit different from what we're going to see in the next verse.

[40 : 11] Be doctrinal. Be doctrinal. Now, you just don't see that every day. Be doctrinal. What in the world? That sounds boring and dry. Right?

That even sounds maybe divisive. Doctrine divides, doesn't it? Yeah, it divides sheep from goats. What do I mean by this? Well, look at verses 15 and 16 with me, if you would.

We're to be found by him in peace, spotless and blameless. We've talked about that. Regard the patience of our Lord as salvation. That's a command. Just as also our beloved brother Paul, according to the wisdom given him, wrote to you.

As also in all his letters speaking in them of these things, in which are some things hard to understand, which the untaught and unstable distort, as they do the rest of the scriptures to their own destruction.

What do I mean by be doctrinal? Be doctrinal. Be diligent. Be doctrinal. Here's what we're talking about. Respond to God based on Jesus coming again.

[41 : 14] Respond biblically. Order yourself by scripture truth, according to truth, according to sound doctrine.

That's another term that Paul uses for truth. Right teaching. On the negative side, reject the lies and deceptions of the false teachers of this earth, of the world, of the system of this world.

Ground yourselves in the truth that God's delay in coming is his patient desire to save his people. Understand, the false teachers have lied about all of that. And so to be doctrinal means ground yourself in the truth, not in the lies.

There are a lot of lies that are told to us all the time. We're called to be people of sound doctrine, people of scripture, people of the Bible.

So we're ordering our lives by that truth. That's what we're being called to. God is patiently delaying in order to save.

[42 : 21] The mockers are saying no, he's just absent minded and absent. No, this was Peter's doctrinal position in verses eight and nine.

Will you look there with me of chapter three? But do not let this one fact escape your notice, beloved with the Lord. One day is like a thousand years and a thousand years like one day. The Lord is not slow about his promise as some count slowness.

The some, as we said, are the mockers. God is patiently gathering his chosen ones to himself from each generation of people.

Now look, when God completes that work, the day of the Lord will come like a thief in the night, catching everyone unawares. God knows who those people are.

Only God knows how many there are and only God knows the final day when the final person whom God has chosen is brought to salvation. That's it. Now we're done.

[43 : 33] Peter brings the apostle Paul's teaching into view. He does that to support the doctrinal integrity of what he is teaching us. Remember, remember, one of Peter's aims is defending his teaching against these false claims of the mockers.

Peter's integrity is not the issue that he's trying to deal with here. It's the fact that he's giving these people the truth and they need to base their lives on that truth. If they're able to discredit Peter like they tried to do with Paul, then they can pull the people away from the truth and make them susceptible to their lies.

Peter is very concerned that that not happened. By mocking and denying Jesus' second coming, these people are openly portraying Peter as the fraud.

Peter counters. What does he counter with? That's not fair. Don't talk about me like that. You hurt my fifis. No. That's not what he's saying, is it?

That's not anywhere near where Peter's coming from. That's not how godly men deal with truth and deal with the challenges of mockers and all of the nonsense that they bring.

[44 : 49] No, Peter counters with what? Sound doctrine. He tells them the truth. These guys are lying. Let me show you in the scripture. And then he brings Paul in and says, look, this is the same thing that Paul's been teaching you.

The apostles are teaching the same things. So are we all frauds? Truthful teaching.

Notice in the text, given him from the Lord. Given him from the Lord. This wisdom given to Peter, it comes from the same source and contains the same or similar doctrinal content as the apostle Paul's teaching.

teaching. So neither Paul or Peter is fabricating what they preach and teach. This is what the mockers are saying. These guys are making this up.

They're making it up to manipulate you and control you. Just the opposite is true. That's what the false teachers and the frauds are doing. He's saying, no, no, no, no, no, no.

[45 : 52] We're both teaching the same things. Look, I want to put this up here because it's a little bit awkward to hear. The twin themes of being diligent in godly living for the attainment of our heavenly reward and being grounded in the doctrinal truth of God's patience, giving opportunity for salvation, themes which are demanding so much of Peter's concern.

These are the truths also taught by the apostle Paul. So given what Peter has told us about the greed, the pride, the sensuality and lust of the false teachers back in chapter two, boy, did we take some time to go through all of that.

It seems most likely then that the deceivers were doing with Paul and his writings what they're now trying to do with the apostle Peter. In other words, the commentators were kind of all over the map speculating about what exactly is he talking about when he talks about Paul's contribution and what they did to Paul and was it this, was it that, was he dealing with this matter or that matter.

To me, contextually, it seems like Peter is simply making the argument that the same kinds of things they're wanting to do and have done and have been motivated by in chapter two, these are the same kind of things that they're throwing at the apostle Paul.

They're just greedy, lustful men. Full of themselves and full of pride. In some way, these men, we don't know exactly how these men were twisting Paul's writings to reflect their false claims about how to live the Christian life.

[47 : 36] So Peter borrows on Paul as a fellow apostle, someone who has also received and taught God's wisdom in truth. Now, one of the reasons that's so important is because he's telling us that Paul's writings are scripture.

This is, again, one of the ways that it helps ground you and I in the confidence of the content of the Bible. This is God's truth given to the apostles by God passed on to us as the scripture.

This is a crucial, crucial point of Peter's defense of the truth and of his apostleship. Both Peter and Paul are faithfully teaching according to God's wisdom given to them as God's appointed apostles.

That is a world of difference between them and the false teachers. The false teachers can't claim those credentials. Paul himself, friends, made this clear in many, many passages.

For example, I want to show you in Colossians 125. You don't have to turn there. I'll put it up here for you. Of this church, I was made a minister according to the stewardship from God.

[48 : 48] Look, bestowed on me for your benefit, not for not for Paul's gain, for your benefit purpose so that I might fully carry out the preaching of the word of God.

That's a called man's life. He's called by God to do what he does for the benefit of God's people. And his mandate is to bring God's people the word of God.

To live it so that he's fighting against hypocrisy and then to preach it and teach it and model it, to counsel it, to ground God's people in sound doctrine.

Be diligent and be doctrinal. That is, be biblical. Be people who are basing your lives on the truth. Raise your kids in scripture. There's no guarantee that they'll stay with it, but your mandate is to be faithful in it, isn't it?

Now, here's the point. Paul was commissioned by God. So that God bestowed on him his apostleship. He didn't preach his own words, but God's words.

[50 : 04] And he didn't do it for personal gain, but for the benefit of the church. Now, among many other verses, I want to give you one more that reflects Peter's emphasis in bringing Paul into the picture.

And I am going to have you turn here if you would. Galatians chapter two. It's really good that you and I are able to connect these dots. So here we have two apostles, one borrowing on the other's credibility and teaching to demonstrate the wonderful consensus, clarity.

And consistency of the truth being taught by them. This is Galatians chapter two, beginning in verse seven. But on the contrary, seeing that I had been entrusted with the gospel to the uncircumcised, just as Peter had been to the circumcised for he who effectually worked for Peter and his apostleship to the circumcised effectually worked for me also to the Gentiles and recognizing the grace that had been given to me, James and Cephas, Peter and John, who were reputed to be pillars, gave to me and Barnabas the right hand of fellowship so that we might go to the Gentiles and they to the circumcised.

So here he's saying they recognized us as apostles. They recognized us as those given the truth from God and commissioned and sent out by God. And so we joined them in that work.

This is why Peter can refer to Paul's writings as scripture in verse 16. And also as also in all of his letters, speaking them of the them of these things in which are some things hard to understand, which the untaught and unstable distort as they do also the rest of the scriptures, just as they're distorting what Paul is saying as he writes scripture.

[52 : 13] They do that with all of the Bible, all of the scriptures. They're going to always make it about them and their agenda. They're going to twist it and manipulate it. But that's not what Paul and Peter are doing.

While some of what Paul wrote to these people in the past is admittedly difficult to understand, he did write about these notice these same things.

And these are the same things that the unstable and untaught are trying to distort both with Paul and with Peter. Now, does it surprise you that these two men would come up against the same opposition?

It shouldn't. Why? Because they have the same. Enemy. The same enemy. Wants to take these men down.

This was a problem then. I'm almost finished. This was a problem then. And friends, it's a major, major problem today.

[53 : 20] And I'll tell you, it it makes. It did it then. It did it. Does it now. So I'm not whining. It makes pastoring so, so much more difficult.

What I'm about to tell you. There are so many. So-called preachers, so-called ministers, so-called teachers who should not be in leadership in churches.

They shouldn't. I remember when I was out in California and going to seminary in one of the chapels, I heard Dr. MacArthur say. There are many, many preachers who should not be in the ministry today.

They are untaught, unstable men who are distorting the truth and leading God's people away. That's a paraphrase, but that's essentially what he said. And I remember how alarming that sounded to me at the time.

Both that he would say that right out in the open. I just wasn't used to that. In the south where I came from, I listened to sermons that made everybody feel good.

[54 : 31] And you just didn't say stuff like that. You waited till you were behind their backs and then you said it. You don't say it to their faces. You'll say it to the whole church.

And then it alarmed me because as I thought about it, because he showed us in scripture like I'm doing you, as I thought about it, I thought, land's in. I had just come off of sitting under one of those guys where what he, what he preached, which wasn't even using the Bible 90% of the time and what he lived, the face that he had in front of the people and the face that he had behind their backs were two different faces.

How do I know? I was on staff. I saw it and heard it with my own eyes and ears. And it shocked me. First staff position. There are many, many, many guys, so-called ministers, leaders who don't need to be in leadership in churches.

Look, some of these men are highly educated bullies. They use their intellect and knowledge to intimidate God's people, not to bless them.

They use their intellect to isolate themselves from God's people and insulate themselves from God's people. So they make themselves out to be the people.

[55 : 51] I have the word. Don't you question me having the word. Kind of nonsense. That's what I came from. That's what I was in.

How dare you question me? Some are simply charlatans. And some are just foolish entertainers and prideful showmen.

They just love having a crowd. They love having a following. They love having people laugh at their jokes and think that they're all that. Trying to pass off the wisdom of men and their own cleverness as doing ministry biblically.

It's a giant sham and it does much harm. But, they all have at least one thing in common. They all malign the truth because they are not in the ministry to serve God, God's truth, or God's people.

They're in it for themselves. And time will bear that out. Time will bear that out. I'm like you, friends. I can't see into anybody's heart any more than you can.

[57 : 11] So, the way that these men are recognized is over time, they will show themselves as these people. They can only keep it under wraps for so long. Typically, typically, they are shown for what they are when hardship hits their lives.

Because they're just like any other pretender. When hardship bangs into who they are, they don't know what to do with it any more than any of us would if we're not in the Lord. And it starts looking like that.

What do they do? They try to grab more control. They try to manipulate into more control. And you'll see it. You stay with them long enough and you'll see it.

Peter makes it plain that their selfish, foolish, and deliberate efforts to distort God's word will bring about their destruction. Now, that's not where he leaves the letter.

That's where I've got to leave it because I need to finish the rest of it. God willing, next week, as you pray for me, we'll take the last couple of verses, pull them into this context, and we'll wrap up 2 Peter.

[58 : 24] Look, Jesus is coming again. Being diligent to live in personal holiness, building your lifestyle on God's truth for salvation, those give evidence that you will escape the coming judgment and share in the joys of a new heaven and a new earth.

These are responses of genuine faith to Jesus coming again. And over the course of a lifetime, they bring peace, joy, and hope.

And that's what Peter wants these people to have. Let's pray together. Father, I know that there are many, many things that we are tempted to build our lives on.

There are many, many things that we are told can help us move through the challenges, trials, disappointments of life. life. But here we have scripture telling us in very clear terms that looking for Jesus to come again is what should ground our hearts in peace.

Knowing that you have made us spotless and blameless, we then should order our lives to live spotless and blameless in this generation. And so I pray for my brothers and sisters to live out the gift of your grace at work in their lives.

[59 : 56] To give themselves eagerly and enthusiastically to this wonderful calling that you have placed on our lives in Christ Jesus to live godly in the present age.

Help your people to give all that they are to this, Lord, that we would not live apathetically or hypocritically. And God forbid that we would be deceived and live in pretense only to hear you tell us, I never knew you.

God, help us. Help us to be people who walk in the love of Jesus and grow in the character of Jesus. It's in his name that we pray and for his glory.

Amen. Amen.