"How Will Jesus Find Us When He Comes?"

2 Peter 3:14-18

7/12/09

May He find us with:

I. **A <u>Peace</u> with Christ** (v 14a)

II. **A <u>Spotless</u> Character** (v. 14b)

III. **A <u>Blameless</u> reputation** (v. 14c)

IV. **A <u>Patient</u> Expectation** (v. 15)

V. **An <u>Accurate</u> Bible Interpretation** (v. 16)

VI. **An <u>Unwavering</u> Christian Walk** (v. 17)

VII. **A <u>Maturing</u> Spiritual Life** (v. 18)

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Introduction:

In the Last Days, many will scoff at the concept of the return of Christ and of God's wrath to follow (v. 3-4).

v. 4
"Where is the promise of His coming?" – What has become of His so-called promise to return?

With skepticism they will ask: "Do you really believe that stuff about Christ coming in the clouds, removing His people from the earth, and then destroying the earth by fire?"

Peter gives us several reasons for the Lord's apparent delay:

1. God judged the world in the Past; He'll do it again (v.5-7)

2. God is not Time-bound nor is He under Time Constraints (v.8)

3. God's apparent delay gives Sinners Time to Repent (v.9)

Although the lost, misguided, deluded world will not expect Christ's return, and religious scoffers will even mock such a concept, Jesus is coming again and judgment day for planet earth shall come.

v. 14
"Beloved" – Peter is addressing God's people – those in a love relationship with God through Jesus Christ.

"Seeing that ye look for such things" – What things is the believer looking for? The return of Christ, the Day of the Lord's wrath on an unbelieving world, and "the new heavens and the new earth" (v. 13).

In light of Christ's impending return and of the soon fulfillment of Bible prophecy, there is a call for personal spiritual <u>diligence</u>! Conscientious allegiance to certain principles of character and behavior is the crying need of the hour!

"Found in Him" - Christ will find us, in the sense of knowing where we are, but the question is: What will be our spiritual condition <u>when</u> He finds us?

May He find us with:

I. A <u>Peace</u> with Christ (v 14a)

"In peace" – Two aspects of peace between the believer and God are mentioned in the Bible:

1) Peace <u>with</u> God (our judicial standing of righteousness; we are no longer at war with God, and God is no longer at war with the sinner)

2) The peace <u>of</u> God (the removal of fear and apprehension relating to all of the worldly turmoil and trouble to exist and weigh upon the believer in the Last Days)

II. A <u>Spotless</u> Character (v. 14b)

"Without spot" – Stains that defile or dirty our hearts.

Make it your goal to be "unspotted by the world."

Things that leave blemishes on our souls include: worldly lusts for vanity, filthy lucre, illicit sexual and sensual pleasures.

You see, your character matters to God. Your inner thoughts and motives reflect your character.

Are we conscientious of how clean we are on the inside?

III. A Blameless reputation (v. 14c)

"Blameless" – This world refers to our reputation. We should be conscientious that no one can point the finger at us and have reason to question our integrity. Leave no room for people to find fault with your faith and conduct.

"Blameless" - Your testimony is vital because you are a commercial for Christ by everything you say and do. Man does look at the outward appearance!

IV. A Patient Expectation (v. 15)

"The longsuffering of God" – Refers to His patient waiting before judging the world in the Day of the Lord's Wrath!

Why no return of Christ yet? God is giving men time for repentance that they might obtain salvation!

Just as He waiting in Noah's day before He unleashed the flood, so God is waiting today before He unleashes the fire!

"Even as" – "Peter insists that there is complete harmony between his teachings and those of Paul. . . He (also) acknowledges Paul's official equality with himself" (Hiebert, p. 170-71).

"Even as our beloved brother Paul. . . hath written" – What was Paul's main topic of choice in all of his letters? Salvation! (particularly – justification by faith)

"The wisdom given unto him" – Paul did not write his epistles from his own thinking and worldview; but like Solomon of old, God gave him divine revelation and wisdom to write the very words and concepts of God!

V. An Accurate Bible Interpretation (v. 16)

What are the rules of hermeneutics?

4 Essential Principles (rules) of Interpretation:

1. Read the Bible literally (normally, plainly)
   (The Literal Principle)

2. Understand the context (of the verses you are studying)
   (The Contextual Principle)

3. Consistently follow rules of grammar (as you study)
   (The Grammatical Principle)

4. compare Scripture with Scripture (as you study)
   (The Theological Principle)

"Hard to be understood" – Difficult to understand; Holy Spirit illumination is a prerequisite to comprehending God's Word.

"Some things (relating to salvation/deliverance) **hard to be understood" –** What are some of these difficult concepts for the world to grasp?

1) Justification by faith alone (apart from the works of the law)

2) Imputed righteousness

3) Eternal security

4) The Rapture and details relating to the believers' resurrection and transformation

"Unlearned and unstable" – Addresses some professing believers who, being void of God's Holy Spirit, are:

--Ignorant of the Scriptures and sound principles of Bible interpretation

--Not anchored to firm convictions relating to the Scripture (they are always coming up with new ideas which deceive others)

"Wrest" (*strebloo*) – to twist, to torture. The figurative sense seems to flow from the notion of twisting or warping. The result is then false and distorted (Rogers, p. 589).

"It is their repeated practice to take Paul's statements and twist and torture them, like poor victims on the rack, to force them to say what they want them to say" (Hiebert, p. 174).

"If the false teachers were already doing this in Peter's day, we need not be surprised at the twisted exegesis of the cults in our own day." (Hiebert, p. 174).

"As they do also the other Scriptures" – "Other" (*loipas*) – meaning other "of the same category" (Acts 2:37; Rom. 1:13; 2 Cor. 12:13; Gal. 2:13; Phil. 4:3).

This statement reveals two things:

1) Those who twist one part of God's Word inevitably twist other parts of God's Word as well

2) Paul's epistles are on equal par with the rest of God's written Word! His written words are just as inspired as the words of Moses or the Gospels of Jesus Christ.

"Unto their own destruction" – the end result of those who (for whatever motive or reason) twist God's Scriptures is their own spiritual ruin! The false teachers will perish in the Lake of fire!

VI. An <u>Unwavering</u> Christian Walk (v. 17)

"Seeing ye know these things before" – Advance warning should prevent spiritual deception, distraction, and destruction!

"Led away. . . fall" – It's always <u>distraction</u> from the truth, then <u>destruction</u> by falling off the straight and narrow!

It's a blessing to see someone still standing firm on his/her convictions after years of trials and tests.

VII. A Maturing Spiritual Life (v. 18)

In contrast to the distraction and derailment described in verse 17, God exhorts us through Peter to continue to **"grow in grace."**

To grow is to mature; to become stronger in our faith and convictions.

The appeal of these last words of this epistle (which are vital, final words) is that we exercise our wills and determine to take steps necessary to increase our spiritual maturity.

What steps do we take to ensure our continued growth?

1) Keeps yourself immersed in God's Word on a daily basis

2) Keep yourself in fellowship with other believers who will encourage your spiritual growth

3) Keep yourself in prayer and frequent communion with the Lord Jesus Christ

--To grow in **"grace"** means to increase in your knowledge and experience of God's unmerited kindness and favor.

--To grow in **"the knowledge"** of our Lord and Savior means to know about Him through His Word and to know Him by prayer.

- Jesus Christ is personal ("our")
- Jesus Christ is sovereign ("Lord")
- Jesus Christ is Deliverer ("Savior)
- Jesus Christ is to be glorified both in time and in eternity! ("now and forever")

It's all about Christ's glory!

When Jesus returns, will He find us bringing glory to Him?

. . . How will He find you?