

THE END IS ONLY THE BEGINNING

You and I are created for eternity. The question is: what will that eternity be like for us? The reality is this: how we live and the way we decide during our time on earth has eternal consequences that leads to either everlasting life or everlasting contempt (Daniel 12:2). How can we be truly ready?

Here are three principles to help us prepare for the end times.

BELIEVE GOD'S PROMISE

2 Peter 3:1-2 begins by giving a wakeup call to the early believers who were subject to persecution and trials. Peter reminded them that though they do not know when, Jesus is certainly coming again (Daniel 7:13-14; Matthew 24:42,44). Jesus declared it Himself (Act 1:10-11) and Peter reminded them not to lose sight of this truth (2 Peter 1:12-15).

2 Peter 3:3-4 tells us that in the last days, mockers will come to make the believers question the coming of Jesus; and Peter warns us not to align ourselves with such people. God cannot be mocked. His word accomplishes what He desires for it to do and succeeds in the purpose for which He sends it, just like His creation of the world and His judgment in the time of Noah. God's word is both powerful and reliable. We must heed His warnings. One day everything in creation will be destroyed by fire (2 Peter 3:7) and if we do not guard our hearts, we might begin to live lukewarm and compromised Christian lives. To believe God's promise is to have a genuine mind and heart conviction that what He says is true such that it impacts our day-to-day life. Do you believe that Jesus is coming soon? How does this impact your daily living?

RESPOND TO GOD'S PATIENCE

2 Peter 3:8-9 tells us that God is not constrained by time because He is from everlasting to everlasting. God is not slow in keeping His promise; He is being patient with us, waiting for all to come to repentance! Repentance is not just a

this week's memory verse

He who overcomes will inherit these things,
and I will be his God, and he will be My son.

REVELATION 21:7

END GAME THE END IS ONLY THE BEGINNING

change of mind, but a change in the inner person that leads to life change. This can only happen when a person surrenders his/her life completely to Jesus as his/her Lord and Savior.

The day of the Lord is likened to a thief (2 Peter 3:10). He will come when we least expect it, so we always need to be ready (Matthew 24:44). He will return as a coming Judge who will decisively judge this world of sin once and for all (Malachi 4:1). Though this may not be our ultimate destiny as believers because of our salvation through Jesus Christ, this should kindle a reverent fear of God in our hearts (Romans 14:10-12). What does it mean to respond to God's patience? It means to commit/re-commit our life to Jesus as our Lord, Master, and Savior. God is patient, and we need to respond to that patience today because Jesus is coming soon!

LIVE FOR GOD'S PLEASURE

Peter also tells the believers to live in holy conduct and godliness. Our thoughts, motives, the decisions we make, the way we handle money, our family relationships, the way we do business — all these things should be done for God's pleasure, His glory, and for His honor. It means that our life is a constant day by day, moment by moment worship (Romans 12:1). For God's people, the end times is something we can look forward to and hasten by sharing Christ to those around us (Matthew 24:14). In the last days, there will be unprincipled men, but we are to be steadfast, unwavering, growing in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ (2 Peter 3:13-14; 17-18).

2 Peter 3:13 and 1 Corinthians 2:9 promise us of new heavens and a new earth with its indescribable beauty! If you have given your life to Jesus, heaven is where you will spend eternity! A place where there will be no more death, mourning, crying, or pain. All God's people will be there, and God Himself will be there. We will be in the glorious presence of Jesus Christ for the rest of eternity. Are we ready for Christ's return? Be ready! The end is truly only the beginning!

discussion questions

Do you really believe in the promised return of the Lord Jesus Christ? How does your answer impact your daily life?

In what way can you best respond to the patience of God?

What do you need to stop, start, or improve in order to live for God's pleasure?

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