

Title: Living in Light of Two Worlds (Part 3)

Passage: 2 Peter 3:12-13

Theme: Living in the shadow of two worlds: one temporal the other eternal

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### {Read Passage}

**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 burning heat and the earth and the works done on it will be exposed. **11** Since all these things are to be destroyed in this way, what kind of people ought you to be in holy conduct and godliness, **12** awaiting and earnestly desiring the coming of the day of God, on account of which the heavens will be destroyed by burning and the elements will dissolve with intense heat! **13** But according to His promise we are expecting new heavens and a new earth, in which righteousness dwells.

I recently read a gripping article written over 30 yrs. ago in t/wake of t/Mt. St. Helens disaster. For those of you who may be too young to remember, or have forgotten, it was back in 1980 that the volcanic mt. in Wash St. erupted after nearly 125 years of inactivity.

The article "Mountain with a Death Wish" published by National Geographic in Jan. 1981. [[nationalgeographic.com/1981/01/mount-st-helens/findley-text/13](http://nationalgeographic.com/1981/01/mount-st-helens/findley-text/13)] Was written by journalist Rowe Findley who was a first-hand witness and survivor of t/monumental eruption.

1981 was t/year I grad. from HS. While I remember t/event, I don't remember any details – I have to admit, Mt. St. Helens was not at t/forefront of my mind back in those days.

There were several sub-plots to t/events leading up to t/deadly blast. Perhaps none more noteworthy than that which surrounded Harry Truman. Not Harry S. Truman, of Washington D.C. (33<sup>rd</sup> Pres), but Harry R. Truman of Spirit Lake, WA (an 83 yr. old man who lived at t/foot of t/threatening Mt.).

When sheriff's deputies ordered all residents to leave for safety, Harry said no.

As Findley recounts his meeting wit/ Harry R. Truman, he writes that: Harry had raised the adjectival use of profanity to a new high, and in a position statement that demonstrated his art, he told me why he wouldn't leave.

[as I read this I'll skip over t/blank spaces where t/adjectives would be]

"I'm going to stay right here because, I'll tell you why, my home and my \_ life's here. My wife and I, we both vowed years and years ago that we'd never leave Spirit Lake. We loved it. It's part of me, and I'm part of that\_ mountain. And if it took my place, and I got out of here, I wouldn't live a week anyway; I wouldn't live a day, not a \_ day. By [golly], my wife went down that \_ road \_ feet first, and that's the way I'm gonna go or I'm not gonna go."

The subplot thickened as Mr. Truman became a bit of a celebrity.

Children from all over t/nation wrote him 100s of letters imploring him to vacate his lodge.

An entire class from Salem, OR wrote to him. Truman was so touched that a visit was scheduled.

On Wednesday, May 14, 1980 journalist Rowe Findley accompanied him by helicopter and wrote of the experience ==>

No Santa Claus ever had a warmer greeting; the entire student body—104 strong—cheered and unfurled crayoned banners (Harry—We Love You) as the whirlybird eased down on the schoolyard turf. . . . Harry, forgoing his usual adjectives, admirably explained how it is to have lived a long, full life, and to have found a piece of the world as dear as life itself. For each child who wrote him, he had a signed postcard showing Spirit Lake and the lodge.

But what would he do if he saw the lava coming for him? “I’d run,” Harry said. The earthquakes worried him more than eruptions, he added, and he had endured a few thousand tremors since the volcano had started to stir. How did he keep from being tossed out of bed at night? “I wear spurs to bed,” Harry said.

It was later reported that when the pre-eruption activity of t/volcano intensified, he moved his mattress to t/basement.

That was Wednesday the 14 . . .

Beginning on Frid., Findley chronicles t/last 2 days leading up to t/eruption.

Friday, May 16. The mountain is playing games with us. An early morning radio message from Coldwater I reports St. Helens in full view. By the time we get aloft, the curtain is closing. By the time we reach the mountain, the mountain can no longer be seen.

Saturday, May 17. All sunshine and no clouds. The mountain drowns on. The north-face bulge continues—swelling five feet a day; other signs say that nothing is about to happen. No need to keep flying around the sleepy mountain.

Sunday, May 18. First sun finds the mountain still drowsing. Because it is drowsing, I decide not to watch it today, a decision that soon will seem like the quintessence of wisdom. Because it is drowsing, others—campers, hikers, photographers, a few timber cutters—will be drawn in, or at least feel no need to hurry out. Their regrets will soon be compressed into a few terrible seconds before oblivion.

That oblivion was signaled by David Johnston, geologist for the United States Geological Survey who announced over his radio 6 miles away: “Vancouver! Vancouver! This is it. . . .”

Those words, right around 8:32 a.m. were his last.

Mt. St. Helens went off w/the energy = 24 megatons of TNT (or 7500 Hiroshima bombs).

Superheated gas up to 1800 deg. F. and fragments of rock & ash were blown horizontally at speeds up to 450 mph.

From as far away as 17 miles, 150' tall Douglas firs were uprooted & snapped in 2 like twigs.

Ash was rocketed 12 miles into the Sunday morning sky. An hour later, Yakima 85 mi. away went into t/equiv. of a nuclear winter

1980 event was t/deadliest & most destructive volcanic eruption in the history of the US. Total of 57 people were killed & 200 homes destroyed or buried in ash.

David Johnston t/geologist whose last words were “[Vancouver! Vancouver! This is it. . . .](#)” Remnants of his USGS trailer were found by state highway workers in 1993. His body was never found.

What of t/crusty blaspheming Harry R. Truman?

Days before he expressed his opinion that the danger from the volcano was exaggerated: “[I don't have any idea whether it will blow\[...\] But I don't believe it to the point that I'm going to pack up.](#)”

["If the mountain goes, I'm going with it. This area is heavily timbered, Spirit Lake is in between me and the mountain, and the mountain is a mile away, the mountain ain't gonna hurt me... boy."](#)

He also mocked, saying of those who wanted him to vacate his home: [Some of ‘em want to save me—somebody sent me a ‘Bible for the hardheaded.’](#)

Truman was alone at his lodge when he and his 16 cats were killed instantly.

Today t/site of his lodge is buried under 150' of volcanic debris.

[most of this data was adapted from [ngm.nationalgeographic.com/1981/01/mount-st-helens/findley-text/13](http://ngm.nationalgeographic.com/1981/01/mount-st-helens/findley-text/13) and wikipedia entries under Harry R. Truman, Mt. St. Helens, and related links]

That was a long introduction to this passage, but I think you can see t/parallels. Cf. 3:3-4, 10, 12.

You can take 3 of t/most devastating volcanic eruptions documented. Mt. Tambora, Indonesia 1816 (killed 92,000). Concussion felt as far as 1000 mi. away. 1816 known as t/“year w/o a summer” – t/volcanic ash in t/atmosphere lowered worldwide temps. Snowed in New England that June. 100k died from starvation as a result of t/crop failures t/o Europe & North America.

Mt. Pelee, West Indies. 1902 (killed 40,000).

1883 Mt. Krakatoa, Indonesia [20x as powerful as Mt. St. Helens] (36,000). Sound of t/explosion = loudest ever documented, traveling almost 3000 miles.

We are living in t/shadow of a cataclysmic event that will make those look like a fireworks display in a sleepy mid-west town on t/4th of July.

Our sovereign God holds t/timetable for that event in t/palm of His hand as He patiently waits for all who are His to come to Him for eternal life.

As believers we live in the shadow of two worlds: the present creation that will pass away with the coming of Christ and the future recreation that we will inherit based upon God's promise.

How are we to live?

*I. We are to live hopefully: knowing that Christ will return (10a)*

*II. We are to live soberly: understanding that this world is temporary (10b)*

*III. We are to live diligently: focusing on the task at hand (11)*

**Since all these things are to be destroyed in this way, what kind of people ought you to be in holy conduct and godliness,**

## A. Eschatology and Ethics are closely wed together by Peter

How you view end-times events (including your own mortality) ought to have an impact on how you live your life.

1 Peter 4:7–10 **7 The end of all things is at hand; therefore, be of sound judgment and sober spirit for the purpose of prayer.****8 Above all, keep fervent in your love for one another, because love covers a multitude of sins.****9 Be hospitable to one another without complaint.****10 As each one has received a special gift, employ it in serving one another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God.**

**What kind of people ought you to be in holy conduct and godliness,**

### 1. All 3 words (adj. and 2 nouns) are plural

Multiple ways that we demonstrate t/goodness of X in our service.

It's a question that continues into v. 12 (brings me to our last point)

**IV. We are to live expectantly: looking forward to the glories of Christ (12-13)**

**What kind of people ought you to be in holy conduct and godliness,**  
[the kind of people that are]  
**awaiting and earnestly desiring the coming of the day of God,**

There are a few things here that we need to unwind . . . Namely a theological issue and an translational issue (1 that relates to theology; other that relates to translation).

**A. Theological Issue** (which really isn't an issue)

**1. What is the coming "day of God"?**

**a. Same thing that Peter spoke of in v. 10 (the day of the Lord)**

The DOTL = The DOG. Not different events.

Interpretational error to try to find different meanings in synonymous terms (common mistake among some dispensationalists). Matthew uses KOH; Luke KOG - Metonymy.

Same w/DOTL / DOG / DOC (Phil. 2:16) – or even t/DOJ in 3:7.

**(1) Used in 2 different ways**

**(a) Historical**

Used of a special visitation of God, generally in judgment. Captivity of Israel to Assyria in 722 BC. Destruction of Jerusalem in AD 70.

**(b) Eschatological (Final)**

End of all things brought about by t/yet-future personal, visible return of JC as KOK / LOL - Rev. 19.

**(2) The historical is a foreshadowing of the eschatological**

Fulfillment in miniature of what is to come in finality

When it comes to end-times events (eschatology) everything isn't binary. It's not always "either or" - sometimes it's "both and".

Has t/Day of t/Lord come? Historically it has come (more than once). But finally, it is yet future.



Thus the church experiences a religious tension. While it has already acquired some benefits of the day of the Lord, it still awaits a thoroughgoing future bestowal at the second coming of Christ. [Gary M. Burge, *Ibid.*]

Peter here is talking about t/Eschatological Day / The Day of Christ's Personal and Visible Return to Earth & all t/events that surround His Coming.

## 2. Why is there such an emphasis in the NT for us to focus on Christ's coming?

From 1<sup>st</sup> c. believers thru t/middle ages, Reformation, today ==> we have been warned that we are to be alert; ready.

### a. You'd think that the emphasis would be on our death

An individual's death is certainly much more imminent than X's return. Over the past 2000 years, myriads of Xns have died (continue). Why doesn't Peter (others) tell us to be focused on our death, rather than on X's return? *Be ready to die. You don't know when that day will come. Be alert. Be prepared.*

While that's not absent (cf. Luke 12; James 4:14) – overarching emphasis seems to be on X's return.

### b. Thoughts . . .

#### (1) In the Bible the emphasis isn't so much on the individual but on the group

There is an individual emphasis, to be sure (we each are individually chosen to be recipients of grace; we are each individually responsible before God as a believer-priest).

But that's not as much an emphasis, I think, as t/fact that we are a body (made up of many members, but a body nonetheless).

**(a) We have this rampant individualism that pervades our culture**

So we flock to giant mega-congregations so that we can worship privately. Or some don't bother to commit to a local CH at all claiming t/attitude that "I can worship God just as well at home."

You ought to be worshiping God at home, work, school, everywhere.

But you won't be truly worshiping him if you aren't including t/local CH.

Like I've said many times, it was always taken for granted that a single Jew was an active part of a greater body known as Israel just as it is was taken for granted that a Xn was part of a greater body known as t/CH.

T/NT writers don't even address t/issue of a believer going it alone. After all, if you were a believer going it alone in t/1st c. you wouldn't have been on t/receiving end of t/Apostle's writings – they were addressed to local congregations.

The picture of eternity I get is one of a great company of men & women redeemed out of every tribe & tongue together worshipping & serving their Creator.

Our eternity is going be social in nature; we'd better get used to it now. No hermits in heaven.

So we are focused as a community on X's return for His bride which is not singular, but plural (many members).

(2) While we are present with Christ upon death we yet await the final resurrection

Jesus told t/repentant thief today you will be with me in Paradise.

Paul wrote that to be absent from the body is to be present with t/Lord and that it was better to depart to be with X.

Yet, the finality of our salvation comes after our glorification. That glorification to a new, resurrected body like that of X occurs not at death but at his coming. Future resurrection.

1 Corinthians 15:51–55,58 51 Behold, I tell you a mystery; we shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed,52 in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet; for the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised imperishable, and we shall be changed.53 For this perishable must put on the imperishable, and this mortal must put on immortality.54 But when this perishable will have put on the imperishable, and this mortal will have put on immortality, then will come about the saying that is written, “DEATH IS SWALLOWED UP in victory.55 “O DEATH, WHERE IS YOUR VICTORY? O DEATH, WHERE IS YOUR STING?”

Ethics and Eschatology

58 Therefore, my beloved brethren, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that your toil is not in vain in the Lord.

(3) The time factor: we don't know what it's going to be like when we die as it relates to the passing of time (cf. v. 8) (time is a creation)

I tend to believe that time won't seem like time. Not like you have Peter James & John w/X saying, "How much longer is this going to be?"

May be that the time that passes between a believer's death to the Lord's coming may feel like an instant. (Cf. those who undergo surgery.)

Keep looking up and don't lose your focus.

**A. Theological Issue**

**B. Translational Issue**

**awaiting and earnestly desiring the coming of the day of God,**

NASB / ESV looking for and hastening.

NIV as you look forward to the DOG and speed its coming.

KJ hastening unto

HCSB earnestly desire

Being one that's used t/NASB for my entire Xn life, it's always puzzled me how we can hasten t/2nd coming of X. Backwards that we have some control over t/time table.

**1. Scholars fall into the same 2 groups that are reflected in the 2 different ways that the verb can be translated (to speed up / to desire)**

**a. Those who claim that the church can actually speed up Christ's coming by being diligent in evangelism**

Those who hold this position point out that the Jews believed that if they would truly repent, God would send the Messiah.

Problem is that not all Jews believed this and there's doubt as to whether that tradition itself goes back to Peter's day.

(beyond that, t/ bottom line is "what saith t/Scripture?")

**(1) The parallel that Peter is drawing from may be Isaiah 60**

Restoration passage that looks forward to t/final deliverance of Israel.  
In Isa. 60 it's God who does t/hastening, not man. Cf. 60:22.

**b. Better view is to understand the verb in a transitive sense ==>**

**. . . earnestly desiring the coming of the day of God,**

Lutheran commentator RCH Lenski ==>

We need not labor the sense by taking  $\sigma\pi\epsilon\acute{\upsilon}\delta\omega$  in the sense of "hasten," speed up the coming of the day of the Lord, so that it will come sooner than it would otherwise come. We question whether the holy conduct of Christians can hasten the day of judgment, whether this is the teaching of the Bible. . . . This verb is widely used in the sense of "to be eager" . . . which fits perfectly here as an intensifying synonym of "expecting."  
[348]

Speaking of Lutherans ==>

Also Luther's view: "For Peter describes this day as one that is to come even now, so that men should be prepared for it, to hope for it with joy, and even hasten to run to meet it, as that which sets us free from death, sin, and hell." [284]

**(1) That fits t/teaching of Scripture as it relates to God's sovereignty**

Those times are "**fixed by the Father's authority**" according to Acts 1:7.

Acts 17:31 **because He has fixed a day in which He will judge the world in righteousness through a Man whom He has appointed, having furnished proof to all men by raising Him from the dead."**

Acts 1:7 ( $\tau\iota\theta\eta\mu\iota$ ); 17:31( $\acute{\iota}\lambda\sigma\tau\eta\mu\iota$ ) - Day is "appointed" or "grounded/fixed".

(2) Also fits what we think Peter is saying in v. 9 as it relates to God's patience

If God is sovereign & predestined you for salv, it wouldn't have mattered if t/entire CH was pristine in obedience & t/Gospel was preached to all t/world back in t/2nd c. – or t/19th for that matter.

**awaiting and earnestly desiring the coming of the day of God,**

(3) After all, you can expect something and not be eager for it

A child can disobey & expect to be punished--but won't be eager for it. Satan expects the coming day of God, but he's not eager to see it.

We are to expect Christ's coming and do so w/eagerness.

That sums up that last point doesn't it?

*IV. We are to live expectantly: looking forward to the glories of Christ (12-13)*

C. What do we see as it relates to the glories of Christ? (13)

1. Christ's glories are in keeping with God's promise (13)

**But according to His promise we are expecting new heavens and a new earth . . .**

a. Where have we seen that word "promise" before?

1:4 (plural) = "precious and magnificent promises."

3:9 {cite and tie in to vv. 10-13 - note "heavens" & "elements" in v. 12}

b. Here too Peter is drawing from Isaiah:

55:17 Behold, I will create new heavens and a new earth. The former things will not be remembered, nor will they come to mind . . .

66:22 As the new heavens and the new earth that I make will endure before me,' declares the Lord, 'so will your name and descendants endure.

**But according to His promise we are expecting new heavens and a new earth . . .**

**c. How will God do that?**

That's an old debate. Goes all t/way back to t/2nd c.

Justin Martyr taught that t/universe would be annihilated and remade.

Irenaeus argued that it would be purified & renovated.

It really doesn't matter.

What matters is that we are looking for it, expecting it.

Fulfillment of God's promises.

After all ==>

**2. Christ's glories are where righteousness dwells (13)**

**But according to His promise we are expecting new heavens and a new earth, in which righteousness dwells.**

**a. Can't image what this will be like!**

What will it be like, to be "you" and yet have no capacity to sin?

Never an illicit thought.

Never failing in your duty unto Christ.

Never a bad attitude.

Joy unspeakable as we together enjoy t/riches of X.

No longer will we have to ==>

*IV. We are to live expectantly: looking forward to the glories of Christ*

Those glories will be ours!

No more sin; devastation of t/fall totally wiped away. No more sorrow, pain, evil, disappointment, suffering, loss, sickness, failure. Paradise lost now X gained.

1 Corinthians 2:9 **but just as it is written, "things which eye has not seen and ear has not heard, and which have not entered the heart of man, all that God has prepared for those who love Him."**

Romans 8:18 **For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that is to be revealed to us.**

{Rev. 21:9-22:5}

"The Doctor" D. Martin Lloyd Jones ==>

That is the biblical view of the ultimate end of history, and according to Peter, Christian people are those who look forward to it. "Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness." How do I feel about history today? What do I feel about things as they are at this present time? How do I keep myself going? What is it that enables me to live? Am I living in the hope that something wonderful will happen, and that all our troubles will be banished and all will be well in a year's time, or two years', or perhaps ten years' time? Am I still clinging to something that is going to happen in this life and in this world for my happiness? If I am, then according to the New Testament, I am worldly minded, I am carnally minded. That is not the biblical view at all. The Bible tells us that the Christian man is one who really lives in the light of this blessed Book, who believes that this world, because of sin, must ultimately be destroyed. [Lloyd Jones, 193-94]