

THE THINGS BELIEVERS MUST DO SINCE JESUS CHRIST IS COMING AGAIN (I) 2 PETER 03: 11–14

Introduction

Jesus Christ is coming to earth again. Therefore, there are some things that believers must do, and they are of critical importance.

- I. Believers must live holy and godly lives (v. 11).
- II. Believers must look for and speed up the day of God (v. 12).
- III. Believers must look for the new heavens and new earth (v. 13).
- IV. Believers must be prepared for the coming of Christ (v. 14).

I. 2 Peter 03:11 *Life of Holiness and Godliness*

Believers must live holy and godly lives. In fact, note the Scripture: *all of our behaviour* must be holy and godly. There is to be no area of our lives — no part, no act — that is not holy and godly. Why? Why such a stress upon holiness and godliness? One strong reason is given.

The heavens and earth are to be dissolved because of the sin and evil of man. It is the sin and evil of man that has made the world so corrupt — corrupt beyond repair. God will be forced to destroy the world because of our sin and evil. The sin and evil of man has put the world under a curse of destruction. Sin and evil are therefore terrible things, abominable things! They should be hated and despised by every man, woman and child. All sin and evil should be despised because of the terrible things they do and have done. They have caused a curse of corruption and utter destruction upon the earth. For this reason, we should hate sin and evil and love holiness and godliness. We should be holy and godly in all of our behaviour.

1. *Holy* means that our behaviour is sanctified, that is, set apart unto God; separated from the world and given over to God; given over to live pure and righteous lives (see *Holy*, 1 Pet. 1:15-16).

Lev 11:45 *I am the Lord who brought you up out of Egypt to be your God; therefore be holy, because I am holy.*

Luke 1:74-75 *To rescue us from the hand of our enemies, and to enable us to serve him without fear in holiness and righteousness before him all our days.*

2 Cor 7:1 *Since we have these promises, dear friends, let us purify ourselves from everything that contaminates body and spirit, perfecting holiness out of reverence for God.*

Heb 12:14 *Make every effort to live in peace with all men and to be holy; without holiness no one will see the Lord.*

1 Pet 1:16 *For it is written: “Be holy, because I am holy.”*

2 Pet 3:11 *Since everything will be destroyed in this way, what kind of people ought you to be? You ought to live holy and godly lives.*

Psa 99:9 *Exalt the LORD our God and worship at his holy mountain, for the LORD our God is holy.*

Isa 6:3 *And they were calling to one another: “Holy, holy, holy is the Lord Almighty; the whole earth is full of his glory.”*

Rev 15:4 *Who will not fear you, O LORD, and bring glory to your name? For you alone are holy. All nations will come and worship before you, for your righteous acts have been revealed.”*

2. *Godly* means that we live like God and seek to be a godly person; that we live and do all things in the reverence and awe of God; that we are so conscious of God’s presence that we live like God would live if He were walking upon earth (see *Godliness*, 2 Pet. 1:3).

Thought 1. Note: godly means to be *Christlike*. Godliness is Christ-likeness: it is living upon earth just as Christ lived.

2 Cor 3:18 *And we, who with unveiled faces all reflect the Lord’s glory, are being transformed into his likeness with ever-increasing glory, which comes from the Lord, who is the Spirit.*

Titus 2:12-13 *It teaches us to say “No” to ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright and godly lives in this present age, while we wait for the blessed hope — the glorious appearing of our great God and Saviour, Jesus Christ.*

2 Pet 3:11 *Since everything will be destroyed in this way, what kind of people ought you to be? You ought to live holy and godly lives.*

II. **2 Peter 03:12** *Await the Return of Jesus Christ*

Believers must look for and seek to bring the day of God about. The day of God refers to the day when God shall dissolve and destroy the heavens and earth, the day when the universe shall be “set aflame by fire and the elements will melt in the heat” (v. 12; see 2 Pet. 3:10). What is to be the attitude of the believer toward the *day of God*?

1. The believer is to “look forward” (prosdokontas) the day of God. The word means to wait; to wait patiently but expectantly; to eagerly anticipate and long for the day of God; to be in expectation (W.E. Vine. *Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words*).
2. The believer is to *speed the coming* of the day of God. The term “speed its coming” (speudontas) can mean two things.
 - a. *To speed its coming* can mean to hurry after; to earnestly desire; to rush toward. The believer is to live a holy and godly life looking for and hastening toward the day of

God. Keeping his eyes upon that terrible day of judgment is to *arouse him* to live a holy and godly life. Every day that he lives upon earth is to be a day in which he hastens toward the judgment of God; he should never take his eyes off the terrible day of God that is coming. If he takes his eyes off that day, if he fails to direct his life toward the day of God, then he will most likely slip into unholiness and ungodliness. He must, therefore, stay focused upon the day of God, the day of the terrible judgment to come upon the heavens and earth.

- b. *To speed its coming* can also mean to *speed up* the day of God; to rush the coming of Christ; to cause the day of God to come sooner. The believer has a part in bringing about the eternal kingdom of God; he has a part in bringing about the return of Christ and the great day of God. How? God is “patient...not wanting anyone to perish” (v. 9). This is the reason He is delaying the return of Christ. Apparently, God has a certain number of believers that He has ordained to be brothers and sisters of His dear Son; apparently there are to be a certain number of believers to rule and manage the new heavens and earth for Christ. In His eternal knowledge God certainly knows the number who will be saved and serving His dear Son. Whatever the number and whatever the case, that number has to be reached before Christ can come and before the great day of God can destroy the universe and make a new heavens and earth. This much is known for sure:

- => God does have a certain number of believers in mind. Being God, He has purposed that His Son have many brothers who will reign with Him and who will worship and serve God through all eternity (cp. Rom. 8:28-29 where God will allow nothing to stop Him from giving Christ “many brothers.”)
- => This Scripture tells us that we are to *speed its coming*, to help bring about the day of God.

Thought 1. How can we help the day of God to come? How can we quicken the return of Christ and the end of the world? By living more holy and godly lives so that more people will more readily be attracted to Christ. The more they see *Christ in us*, His presence and power carrying us through the trials and temptations of life, the more they are going to want Christ and His power in their lives. The more holy and godly we live the more people will see the things for which they long...

- strength to conquer the trials and temptations of life
- hope in the future
- assurance and confidence of living forever
- conviction, purpose, meaning and significance in life
- love, joy and peace

When people see these things, the things for which they long, they will be attracted to Christ much quicker. The result will be more souls for Christ. They will be won much quicker and the number that God has in mind will be reached much sooner.

Therefore, the way we are to *speed up* the day of God is to live more dynamic lives for Christ. We must live more holy and godly lives for Christ, and we must witness more diligently than ever before. We must begin to tell everyone that the Messiah, the Saviour of the world, has come — that He has come to save us from the sin and death of the world and to give us a life of love, joy, peace and power — the power to live abundantly both now and forever.

Acts 24:15 And I have the same hope in God as these men, that there will be a resurrection of both the righteous and the wicked.

Col 1:5-6 The faith and love that spring from the hope that is stored up for you in heaven and that you have already heard about in the word of truth, the gospel that has come to you. All over the world this gospel is bearing fruit and growing, just as it has been doing among you since the day you heard it and understood God's grace in all its truth.

Titus 2:12-13 It teaches us to say "No" to ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright and godly lives in this present age, while we wait for the blessed hope — the glorious appearing of our great God and Saviour, Jesus Christ.

1 Pet 1:3 Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! In his great mercy he has given us new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead.

1 Pet 3:15 But in your hearts set apart Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect.

2 Pet 2:9 If this is so, then the Lord knows how to rescue godly men from trials and to hold the unrighteous for the day of judgment, while continuing their punishment.

1 John 3:1-3 How great is the love the Father has lavished on us, that we should be called children of God! And that is what we are! The reason the world does not know us is that it did not know him. Dear friends, now we are children of God, and what we will be has not yet been made known. But we know that when he appears, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is. Everyone who has this hope in him purifies himself, just as he is pure.

III. *2 Peter 03:13 New Heavens and New Earth*

Believers must look for a new heavens and earth. Scripture clearly says that God is going to create a new heavens and a new earth. No matter what men may think and say about the issue, God declares as simply and as clearly as human language can describe that He is going to make a *new heavens and a new earth*. Why? So that the world will be perfect and nothing but righteousness will exist therein. God has *ordained* a perfect world, a world in which only righteous people will live. God wants a world where there will be

no more sin and evil, no more accidents, disease, suffering, murder, drunkenness, drugs, adultery, sexual perversion, war or death. God wants a people who know only the fullness of love, joy and peace, a people who worship and serve Him forever and ever. (See note, pt. 2, 2 Pet. 3:10.) The old but great Pulpit Commentary says:

“St. John, like St. Peter, speaks of a new earth, and tells us that that new earth will be the dwelling place of the blessed [believer]. He saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven; the throne of God and of the Lamb (he tells us shall be in it). ‘The tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them.’ The holy city, Jerusalem, which is above, is in heaven now. ..But heaven will come down to earth; the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be there [upon earth]; there his servants shall serve him” (The Pulpit Commentary, Vol. 22, p. 69f).

The great Biblical commentator Mathew Henry says:

“In these new heavens and earth...only righteousness shall dwell; this is to be the habitation of such righteous persons as do righteousness, and are free from the power and pollution of sin...those only who are clothed with the righteousness of Christ, and sanctified by the Holy Ghost, shall be admitted to dwell in this holy place” (Mathew Henry’s Commentary, Vol. 6, p. 1057.)

Rom 8:18-22 *I consider that our present sufferings are not worth comparing with the glory that will be revealed in us. The creation waits in eager expectation for the sons of God to be revealed. For the creation was subjected to frustration, not by its own choice, but by the will of the one who subjected it, in hope that the creation itself will be liberated from its bondage to decay and brought into the glorious freedom of the children of God. We know that the whole creation has been groaning as in the pains of childbirth right up to the present time.*

Heb 11:10 *For he was looking forward to the city with foundations, whose architect and builder is God.*

Heb 11:13-16 *All these people were still living by faith when they died. They did not receive the things promised; they only saw them and welcomed them from a distance. And they admitted that they were aliens and strangers on earth. People who say such things show that they are looking for a country of their own. If they had been thinking of the country they had left, they would have had opportunity to return. Instead, they were longing for a better country — a heavenly one. Therefore God is not ashamed to be called their God, for he has prepared a city for them.*

2 Pet 3:13 *But in keeping with his promise we are looking forward to a new heaven and a new earth, the home of righteousness.*

Rev 21:1-5 *Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and there was no longer any sea. I saw the Holy City, the*

new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride beautifully dressed for her husband. And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, "Now the dwelling of God is with men, and he will live with them. They will be his people, and God himself will be with them and be their God. He will wipe every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away." He who was seated on the throne said, "I am making everything new!" Then he said, "Write this down, for these words are trustworthy and true."

Isa 65:17 *"Behold, I will create new heavens and a new earth. The former things will not be remembered, nor will they come to mind."*

Isa 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."*

IV. 2 Peter 03:14 Preparing for the Return of Jesus Christ

Believers must make every effort and be prepared for the coming of Christ. The word "effort" (spoudasate) means to be eager; to strive earnestly; to be zealous in seeking after. The believer is to be diligent, that is, eager, earnest and zealous in preparing himself for the return of the Lord. Why? So that the Lord will find him prepared. Note that three preparations are necessary.

1. The believer must be *found spotless*. This means to be clean, pure and unsoiled; to have no dirt, pollution or contamination of sin whatsoever. The believer is to be confessing his sins always, all day long. He is to be walking in constant communion and fellowship with Christ, walking in open confession, confessing all the sin and contamination that he picks up from the world. Just being in the world means that some of the pollution of sin catches the eye and ears of the believer and causes unclean thoughts to cross his mind. The believer must walk in open confession, praying always for the power of Christ's blood to cleanse him and to keep him pure. This is the only way a believer can ever be found spotless by Christ when He returns.

1 John 1:9 *If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness.*

Acts 13:38 *"Therefore, my brothers, I want you to know that through Jesus the forgiveness of sins is proclaimed to you."*

Eph 1:7 *In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, in accordance with the riches of God's grace.*

Isa 55:7 *Let the wicked forsake his way and the evil man his thoughts. Let him turn to the Lord, and he will have mercy on him, and to our God, for he will freely pardon.*

2. The believer must be found "*blameless*" (amometoi). The word means free from fault and censure; to be faultless; above reproach and rebuke. The believer is to live a blameless, faultless and pure life, both in the church and in the world. No one is to be

able to point to the Christian and accuse or blame him with anything. The Christian is to be clean, unpolluted, spotless, holy, righteous and pure before man and God.

Rom 16:19 *Everyone has heard about your obedience, so I am full of joy over you; but I want you to be wise about what is good, and innocent about what is evil.*

Phil 1:10 *So that you may be able to discern what is best and may be pure and blameless until the day of Christ.*

Phil 2:15 *So that you may become blameless and pure, children of God without fault in a crooked and depraved generation, in which you shine like stars in the universe.*

2 Tim 4:18 *The Lord will rescue me from every evil attack and will bring me safely to his heavenly kingdom. To him be glory for ever and ever. Amen.*

Heb 7:26 *Such a high priest meets our need — one who is holy, blameless, pure, set apart from sinners, exalted above the heavens.*

2 Pet 3:14 *So then, dear friends, since you are looking forward to this, make every effort to be found spotless, blameless and at peace with him.*

Jude 1:24 *To him who is able to keep you from falling and to present you before his glorious presence without fault and with great joy.*

3. The believer must be found in *peace*. He must be at peace with *both God and man*. He must not be living in rebellion against God nor be divided against his brothers and sisters. He must not be...

- living like he wants instead of how God says
- doing his own thing
- living in sin
- being selfish and hateful
- grumbling and back-biting
- neglecting and ignoring God
- disobeying God
- cheating, lying or stealing
- gossiping and criticizing
- stirring up trouble within the church

The believer must be at peace with God and with men. He must be living just like God says to live, and he must be living as one with his brothers and sisters. When Christ comes, no believer dare be found criticizing and being divided from a brother or sister. And no believer dare be found at odds with Christ and not living for Christ. Such sinful behaviour will be severely judged.

Rom 5:1 *Therefore, since we have been justified through faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.*

1 Cor 1:10 *I appeal to you, brothers, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that all of you agree with one another so that there may be no divisions among you and that you may be perfectly united in mind and thought.*

2 Cor 13:11 Finally, brothers, good-bye. Aim for perfection, listen to my appeal, be of one mind, live in peace. And the God of love and peace will be with you.

Eph 2:14 For he himself is our peace, who has made the two one and has destroyed the barrier, the dividing wall of hostility.

Eph 4:3 Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace.

Phil 1:27 Whatever happens, conduct yourselves in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ. Then, whether I come and see you or only hear about you in my absence, I will know that you stand firm in one spirit, contending as one man for the faith of the gospel.

Col 1:20 And through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether things on earth or things in heaven, by making peace through his blood, shed on the cross.

Col 3:15 Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, since as members of one body you were called to peace. And be thankful.

1 Pet 3:8 Finally, all of you, live in harmony with one another; be sympathetic, love as brothers, be compassionate and humble.

Job 22:21 “Submit to God and be at peace with him; in this way prosperity will come to you.”

Psa 34:14 Turn from evil and do good; seek peace and pursue it. ■