

Is Jesus Still Planning a Come Back?

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INTRODUCTION

- The church was packed and the preacher was wound up to a fever pitch speaking on the 2nd coming of Jesus. Quoting Jesus' promise, he shouted out "I am coming soon!" He preached some more and said even more loudly "I am coming soon!!" He preached a little longer and threw his arms up in the air and cried out "I am coming soon!"

At this point, he lost his balance and tumbled off the stage into the lap of a gentleman in the 1st row. The preacher got up and apologized to the man, but the man replied: "Oh, that's ok, you warned me three times."

- Continuing our series on Growing Christians from 2nd Peter. (ch 3:1-10)
- Today's message has to do with Jesus' promise to return again.
 - John 14:1-3
 - Acts 1:10-11 (angels appearing after Jesus ascended)
- 2 Peter 3 talks about the return of the Lord
 - v. 1-10 deal with detractors and God's timing
 - v. 11-18 deal with our preparation for Jesus' return (in 2 weeks)
- Why did Peter write?
 - Remember the background: heavy persecution
 - 3:1 "to stimulate you to wholesome thinking"
 - solid understanding of the truth (last week)
 - enables us to stand up to scrutiny
 - Reminds us in v. 2 again to listen to the scriptures
 - Scriptures give us a solid foundation

WHY DID THEY NEED THIS STRONG FOUNDATION?

- Why do we need it?
- 3:3-4 "...you must understand that in the last days scoffers will come, scoffing and following their own evil desires. They will say, "Where is this 'coming' he promised? Ever since our fathers died, everything goes on as it has since the beginning of creation."
 - First off, we must understand that those who want to run their own lives will always find excuses or ways to rationalize their views.
 - They are like the drunken cowboy that was stopped by the Highway Patrol. The cowboy refused to take a breath analyzer test... He explained: "The last time I took one of those tests, I flunked and I am a lot drunker now than I was then."
 - Like this drunk, people refuse to face the facts
- Ignoring the potential for judgment is a mistake

- God has shown his judgment already.
 - Noah's flood
 - Sodom and Gomorrah
 - 10 plagues of Egypt
- When Peter refers to Noah's flood (v. 6), he's saying: God's done it before... he'll do it again – count on it!
- In other words, it doesn't matter whether or not you think He's coming again in judgment – He Is!
- We need the foundation of scripture to keep us straight when these selfish and inward thinking people attack our faith and our beliefs.
- Peter says that there will always be folks who will scoff at the idea that the world is going to come to an end some day.
- They will laugh at the idea and ridicule the notion that Jesus is coming back again. And the reason they'll do that is because they are walking according to their own lusts.

ITS AN EXCUSE, BUT ITS MORE THAN THAT TOO

- I've often said that our understanding of time is a problem for us.
- A 24-hour clock rules our lives.
- If something doesn't happen in a reasonable time, will it ever?
- When Jesus said he was going to return, many people would have thought He was just going on vacation.
- Peter right reminds us that God's view of time is different than ours.
- Read v. 8-9
- First: one day is like a thousand years
 - This is not a literal, mathematic equation
 - God is eternal, so He doesn't see things the way we do.
 - If you are an eternal being, how "soon" is "soon".
 - For us,
 - If waiting for the bus "soon" may be a couple minutes.
 - If waiting for dinner, may be 15 minutes
 - If moving to a new house or job, may be 2 weeks
 - BUT, if you an eternal being who has and will live forever, soon could be 10 years or 1,000 years
- Second: God wants to see more saved
 - Remember that God's nature is love
 - He wants all people to come into relationship with him
 - He gives opportunity after opportunity for that to happen.
 - He's very patient in waiting for the unrepentant to come

CONCLUSION

- We shouldn't take God's patience for granted though.
- He is going to come. Read v. 10
- The earth will come to an end as we know it.
- It will come like a thief – unexpected, no warning
- Are you going to be ready?