

Text: 2 Pt 3.14-16

We are closing in on the end of 2 Peter. Our next section covers ch. 3, vv. 14-16. Hiebert says,

“The hortatory nature of the concluding section of this chapter is evident from the fact that all four of its main verbs are in the imperative.”¹

To interpret, “this is an exhortation.”

Read 2 Pt 3.8-16, text 14-16

Peter wants us to do something in light of what he has taught us.

To set up our message, there are some things we need to note:

- Notice the phrase “these things” in v. 14 and v. 16
- Notice how Peter invokes Paul in support of his exhortation

These things

- The patience of the Lord (8-9)
- The sudden destruction of the day of the Lord (10)
- The burning of the heavens, the melting of the elements in the day of God (11-12)
- The coming of new heavens and a new earth (13)

If we can keep “these things” in our mind as we study, we will have a better grasp of Peter’s message in our text.

Proposition: Eschatology motivates practical Christian living.

Eschatology = “these things”

I. Action: Diligence of the beloved (14)

A. Objective: to be found in peace

1. All believers are already justified: “peace” does not equal “justification”
 - a. Salvation is by faith in Christ’s work for us

¹ D. Edmond Hiebert, *Second Peter and Jude: An Expositional Commentary* (Greenville, S.C: Bob Jones University Press, 1989), 167.

- b. We can't add anything to Christ's work
- c. Once justified, we are already glorified

Rm 8.29-30 For those whom He foreknew, He also predestined to *become* conformed to the image of His Son, so that He would be the firstborn among many brethren;³⁰ and these whom He predestined, He also called; and these whom He called, He also justified; and these whom He justified, He also glorified.

Salvation is a "done deal."

- 2. To be found by Him refers to His coming
 - a. The Lord will return for his own
 - b. When he comes, we are called to be watching

Mt 24.43-44 "But be sure of this, that if the head of the house had known at what time of the night the thief was coming, he would have been on the alert and would not have allowed his house to be broken into.⁴⁴ "For this reason you also must be ready; for the Son of Man is coming at an hour when you do not think *He will*.

- c. We can take steps to be found in peace
- 3. What does "in peace" mean?
 - a. In peace is clarified by "spotless and blameless"
 - 1) Parallel expressions give insight

Ep 5.27 that He might present to Himself the church in all her glory, having no spot or wrinkle or any such thing; but that she would be holy and blameless.

Phil 2.15 so that you will prove yourselves to be blameless and innocent, children of God above reproach in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, among whom you appear as lights in the world,

Col 1.22 yet He has now reconciled you in His fleshly body through death, in order to present you before Him holy and blameless and beyond reproach—

Jude 1.24 Now to Him who is able to keep you from stumbling, and to make you stand in the presence of His glory blameless with great joy,

- 2) We are spotless and blameless “in Christ” — *i.e.*, we appear before God in Christ’s robes, in Christ’s perfection
- 3) However, Peter is exhorting us to do something to be found “in peace, spotless and blameless”
 - a) This cannot mean sinless perfection (none of us are)
 - b) It means we need to live at peace with God and his plan (and long waiting)

b. The false teachers were spots and blemishes

2 Pt 2.13 suffering wrong as the wages of doing wrong. They count it a pleasure to revel in the daytime. They are stains and blemishes, reveling in their deceptions, as they carouse with you,

Any believers who might be distracted or disaffected by their false teaching would not be found “in peace”

Paul talks about Christians whose works are burned up, but they are saved “as if by fire” (1 Cor 3.15)

B. Our activity: be diligent

1. Since we look for these things (eschatology) be diligent
2. The word “diligent” is used earlier in the epistle

2 Pt 1.5 Now for this very reason also, applying all diligence, in your faith supply moral excellence, and in *your* moral excellence, knowledge,

2 Pt 1.10 Therefore, brethren, be all the more diligent to make certain about His calling and choosing you; for as long as you practice these things, you will never stumble;

3. Our diligence involves those things that produce spiritual growth
 - a. Adding to our faith the spiritual virtues (or developing them in our faith)
 - b. Focusing on our calling and election, our relationship with God

- c. Lexicon gives this meaning here: “to be especially conscientious in discharging an obligation, *be zealous/eager, take pains, make every effort, be conscientious*”²

We are to make Christian living our daily pursuit.

II. Attitude: Understanding God’s patience (15)

- A. The mocker’s mocked God’s promise: (2 Pt 3.3-4)

^{2 Pt 3.3-4} Know this first of all, that in the last days mockers will come with *their* mocking, following after their own lusts,⁴ and saying, “Where is the promise of His coming? For *ever* since the fathers fell asleep, all continues just as it was from the beginning of creation.”

- B. The believer understands God’s patience

1. Knowing that time is irrelevant to God (see 2 Pt 3.8)
2. Knowing that God’s patience is for salvation
 - a. God waits if perchance more would repent and come to faith
 - b. God waits for believers to grow so that they will be found in peace
3. The ungodly use God’s patience to multiply sins; the saints must use God’s patience to multiply righteousness

III. Assurance: Encouraged by Paul’s confirmation (16)

- A. Peter surprisingly invokes Paul to confirm

1. Peter has a close relationship with his beloved brother
2. Peter likely knows all, or almost all, of Paul’s epistles by this point
3. Peter cites Paul’s exhortations as supportive of his teaching

- B. Peter acknowledges the difficulty of some Pauline passages

We would have to include Peter in this number!

² Walter Bauer, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*, ed. Frederick W. Danker, 3rd ed. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000).

1. Yet Paul is speaking of “these things” — *i.e.*, the same subject
 2. “These things” are as true in Paul as they are in Peter
 3. Yet again, it is “these things” that unbelievers distort
 - a. It is not that they are not ignorant because they were not informed
 - b. It is that they are ignorant because of their wills, and they distort God’s truth
 - c. Not only Peter’s and Paul’s teachings, but also the rest of the Scriptures
- C. The support of Paul (and other apostles) encourages our obedience

Conclusion:

Proposition: Eschatology motivates practical Christian living.

To close with some Spurgeon:

“His patience sometimes greatly puzzles us. We cannot make it out. One of the reasons is that we do not have much patience ourselves. We think that we do well to be angry with the rebellious, and so we prove ourselves to be more like Jonah than Jesus. A few have learned to be patient and pitying to the ungodly, but many more are of the mind of James and John, who would have called fire from heaven upon those who rejected the Savior.

“We are all the more puzzled, again, because the ungodly so sadly misuse this patience of God as a reason for greater sin, and as a motive for denying that there is a God at all. Because He gives them space for repentance, they make it into space for iniquity. Because He will not deal out His judgments immediately, they say, ‘Where is the promise of his coming?’ (2 Pet 3:4)

“Yet we ought not to be affected by the hissing of these serpents. Surely we would not have our God change His purposes because of the foolish taunts of men. God is not easily moved, even by the blasphemies of the ungodly. He may be provoked one of these days, for patience has its end, but for a while the Lord pauses in pity, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance (2 Pet 3:9).”³

³ Spurgeon, *2 Peter*, 2 Pt 3.15.