

INTRODUCTION.

- A. Scripture text: **2Peter 3:3-12**.
- B. To find the complete picture of what will happen when X returns we must go to many different books of the Bible and piece together the truth we find in each of them.
- C. I want to speak tonight on what Peter has to say about the second coming of Jesus.
- D. Not only do we see what will happen, but a stern challenge is given to Xians.

I. **FIRST, EVERYTHING WILL BE NORMAL (2Peter 3:3-8).**

- A. The mockers are incorrect because all things are not as they were at the beginning of creation. The present earth and heavens are far different (no rain before the flood, a more uniform climate due to the firmament, longer life span for most people, and no change of seasons).
- B. Of the day or hour that Jesus returns no one knows except God (Mt. 24:36).
"But of that day and hour no one knows, not even the angels of heaven, nor the Son, but the Father alone."
- C. Peter did not mention any signs that would precede the coming of X.
- D. Christ's coming will be just as sudden as the rains in the days of Noah (Mt. 24:37-42). Noah warned of doom, and we warn of doom.
- E. Remember God does not mark time like man does. What may seem long to man (in this case the mockers) is very short unto God.

II. **SECOND, JC RETURN IS DELAYED BECAUSE OF GOD'S LONG-SUFFERING (2Peter 3:9).**

- A. To me this is one of the greatest verses in all the Bible (2Pet. 3:9). God has every right to come in judgment and destroy all things, but He is long-suffering so that as many as possible will be saved.
The Lord is not slow about His promise, as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing for any to perish but for all to come to repentance.
- B. To be *long-suffering* means to hold anger. God is more than patient; He is holding back His anger (on the final day, see v. 7,10) to give all men another opportunity to be right with Him.
But the present heavens and earth by His word are being reserved for fire, kept for the day of judgment and destruction of ungodly men. **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 intense heat, and the earth and its works will be burned up.
- D. Every day that we have is a new day we are allowed to get things right with God. And this applies to both Xians and non-Xians. God's long-suffering is salvation (2Pet. 3:15).
and regard the patience of our Lord to be salvation; just as also our beloved brother Paul, according to the wisdom given him, wrote to you,
- E. Some of us have trouble holding back our anger when wronged. Aren't you glad that God does not behave like we sometimes do.
- F. God's long-suffering should lead us to repentance. The mockers did not see it this way (Rom. 2:4).
Or do you think lightly of the riches of His kindness and forbearance and patience, not knowing that the kindness of God leads you to repentance?

III. **THIRD, ALL THINGS WILL BE DESTROYED (2Peter 3:10).**

Very simply, Peter says that everything as we now know it will be destroyed by fire. Material things should never matter to us because we cannot take them in death and they will be destroyed on the final day.
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 intense heat, and the earth and its works will be burned up.

IV. **FOURTH, PETER'S CHALLENGE (2Peter 3:11-12).**

- A. There are many things that Peter did not mention about the final day which are revealed to us in other Bible writings.

1. X's coming in the clouds.
 2. Trumpets sounding.
 3. All the dead (both good and bad) being raised.
 4. The dead in X going first, and the faithful to follow.
 5. The changing of the perishable to imperishable in the twinkling of an eye.
- B. But Peter does give us that which is probably more valuable. Whatever happens on that final day happens. God will execute His will and we have no power to change it.
- C. What we can do is prepare for that day. And this is Peter's advice--knowing what will happen should help us to get ready (2Pet. 3:11-12).
Since all these things are to be destroyed in this way, what sort of people ought you to be in holy conduct and godliness, looking for and hastening the coming of the day of God, on account of which the heavens will be destroyed by burning, and the elements will melt with intense heat!
- D. Peter says that we should hasten this great day. Only lives that are ready spiritually can do that. If you are not ready for Jesus to come again and for God to destroy the world, then you are not in a right spiritual relationship to God.

CONCLUSION AND INVITATION.

- A. As stated earlier this is not a complete story on what will happen on the final day when Jesus returns.
- B. But Peter has told us enough so that we might put all things in perspective. God will do what God will do and not be late in doing it.
- C. God's long-suffering is allowing us time to repent and make sure that we are right with Him before X comes.
- D. Plan of salvation for non-Xians, erring Xians.