

March 6, 2022

Transformed

"The Lord is not slow in keeping his promise, as some understand slowness. He is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance. But the day of the Lord will come like a thief. The heavens will disappear with a roar; the elements will be destroyed by fire, and the earth and everything in it will be laid bare. Since everything will be destroyed in this way, what kind of people ought you to be?" II Peter 3:9-11

What is most important to us in this world? What matters the most? Where do we focus our time and attention? Do we focus our energies on possessions, on comforts, on likes and dislikes? The focus of our energies is a clear indicator of where our heart is. We cannot, as our Lord would say, "...serve two masters...", so which master do we serve?

As Peter closes out his second letter with these final words knowing, as he does, that his life will soon end, his message is clear. As has always been true, each one of us must choose whom we will serve. Either we choose to serve the God of heaven or we choose to serve the gods of this world, but we cannot choose to serve both. We must choose only one.

And, the Apostle will tell us, we must understand that ultimately only one of our choices will survive. Everything in this world, everything we know and love and count on is destined for destruction. Peter reminds each and every one of us, **"But the day of the Lord will come..."**

And there lies a part of our problem doesn't it? If we have studied God's word at all we know that Jesus has promised to return and that on that day we will face judgment. But that day has not come has it? Day in and day out life goes on pretty much as it always has and, we would like to believe, it always will.

Sure, there are times, like now, when our confidence in the day-to-day routine of life is shaken, but we still don't really fear the end of all things, do we? Not yet. We tell ourselves that the cycles of life that we have depended on for so long will continue and that the prophecies about the end are still far, far off. But are they? Even as believers we continue to put our confidence in life pretty much unchanged.

As believers, Peter would call us to remember the Lord's promise. This world **will end** and everything **will be destroyed** and judgment **will come**. If we do not truly believe in this promise then we will feel no urgency. If we continue to put our confidence in the function of this world as it presently exists then we will have no need to change, to be transformed, and that complacency will be a trap.

While our God is patient; still giving us time to choose him, but that time is not endless. His patience will run out and the coming destruction he promises will come. So, the Apostle will challenge us, **"Since everything will be destroyed in this way, what kind of people ought you to be?"**

We could easily fill pages and pages with answers to that question couldn't we? Peter's admonition is simply, **"You ought to live holy and godly lives..."** But what does he mean by that? What do holy and godly lives look like? Again, there are pages and pages that could be and have been written on that question. Indeed, much of the New Testament contains the answers to that question.

Because of the culture that we now inhabit you and I have become accustomed to 'sound bite' thinking. So, here's our 'sound bite': **"Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit..."**

(Philippians 2:3) I believe that this command from the Apostle Paul completely summarizes my task in this life. If I could but learn to **"Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit..."** I believe I would be living the holy and godly life Peter has called me to live.

