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Live Holy and Godly Lives (THIS ONE)

2 Peter 3:1-18 (Key verse: 3:11b-12a)

“You ought to live holy and godly lives as you look forward to the day of God and speed its coming.”

Have we believed the full message of God? God's creation work, the fall of man, Jesus' coming into the world, His life and ministry, His death to save the fallen man and resurrection, His ascension and sovereign rule, His second coming and the day of the Lord. Today, we are reminded of the day of the Lord, we are therefore going to learn what the day of the Lord means. Furthermore, how can we be ready in the last days for the day of the Lord? The key verse says we ought to live holy and godly lives. We are therefore also going to learn what it means to live holy and godly lives, and how can one live a holy and godly life as we they await the day of the Lord.

How will the last days be like?

Peter is reminding believers of the last days. Let's look at **verse 1-2**, “Dear friends, this is now my second letter to you. I have written both of them as reminders to stimulate you to wholesome thinking. ²I want you to recall the words spoken in the past by the holy prophets and the command given by our Lord and Savior through your apostles.” Here Peter reminds believers (as he did also in his first letter) of the prophecies by the prophets and Jesus' promises and teachings through the apostles in order to stimulate believers into wholesome thinking. In particular, he reminds them about what should be known considering the day of the Lord. Why would Peter do this? Firstly, is because people forget. There world is full of many things that can occupy our minds. These things can occupy our minds so much so that we even forget the teachings of Jesus. For example, we might find ourselves remembering about the grace of God to save us from sin and not remember about Jesus' second coming and the day of the Lord. This is why Peter repeated this gospel again and again. We can easily forget especially the gospel truth. Secondly, we need to be reminded of the word of God because scoffers will come.

In **verse 3**, “Above all, you must understand that in the last days scoffers will come, scoffing and following their own evil desires.” Here we see that in the last days there will be scoffers who will come, scoffing, and following their evil ways. The last days are the days we live in now. Scoffers are people who mock what God says. In **verse 4**, “⁴They will say, “Where is this ‘coming’ he promised? Ever since our ancestors died, everything goes on as it has since the beginning of creation.”” These scoffers will say that Jesus said He was coming about 2000 years ago. Our ancestors died believing in this and even today many years later things have been continuing like in the beginning of creation. They are claiming that nothing ever changes, and everything just keeps on going as it always has, based on their knowledge of their times and their father's times and grandfather's times. A generation comes and a generation goes and still things are just the same: the world is full of problems and injustice and life is hard and burdensome. With this argument they conclude, “what can we do but indulge in pleasure?” with this conclusion their motto ends up being, “Let us drink and eat, for tomorrow we die.” This is a mockery of God because they are saying

that God's word is failing. We may think that this is too big for us or even wonder who are these scoffers? These scoffers are among us, and at times these scoffers are us. When we don't believe in the full gospel about Jesus, or we forget about what the bible teaches we can easily become scoffers.

Just like in the time of Noah people are continuing with life. We are planning our lives and live as if we are lords over our lives and not acknowledging Jesus as Lord. This is mockery to God because though we confess each day that Jesus is Lord and that He is coming we do not live as those who are eagerly awaiting His coming. I pray that we may remember about the day of the Lord now, as we are living in the last days.

How did Peter remind the believers and show them that this kind of thinking is wrong? Let's look at **verse 5-7**, “⁵But they deliberately forget that long ago by God's word the heavens came into being and the earth was formed out of water and by water. ⁶By these waters also the world of that time was deluged and destroyed. ⁷By the same word the present heavens and earth are reserved for fire, being kept for the day of judgment and destruction of the ungodly.” The first argument for the scoffers is that everything has remained the same. This kind of thinking is wrong. In the beginning there was nothing and God created the heavens and the earth by His word. When God said, “Let there be light,” there was light (**Gen 1:3**). When God said, “Let there be a vault between the waters to separate water from water,” it was so (**Gen 1:6**). Whatever command God gave was fulfilled exactly as He said. God's word is the power that created all things. Again, we see God's divine intervention in human history to judge the wickedness of mankind during the times of Noah. Also, we see how God saved Noah who believed and was obedient to God's way of saving him and his family. This is a true event that happened in the past. This event overshadows that God will never leave sin unpunished. He will destroy all the evildoers and will spare a remnant. Indeed, if scoffers believe that God is the Creator and that He judged the wickedness of the people of Noah's time, then they will believe that everything has not remained the same. And that God will in the same way destroy the present heaven and earth and the ungodly. This is the power of the word of God. The word of God never fails.

The second part of the scoffer's argument is that God is slow. In holding to the truth that God will destroy all wickedness it is important to not forget that God is patient. **Verse 8**, “⁸But do not forget this one thing, dear friends: With the Lord a day is like a thousand years, and a thousand years are like a day.” God's view of time is different from ours. God stands above time and can look down the corridors of history to see the end from the beginning. Considering his eternity, a thousand years are like a day. On the other hand, we are confined in a small period of time. Believing that God is confined in this time may cause us to be confused. And even believe that God is slow. God may seem slow, but it's only because He is patient not wanting any of us to perish but to come to repentance and acceptance of Jesus Christ as our Lord. Let's look at **verse 9**, “⁹The Lord is not slow in keeping his promise, as some understand slowness. Instead, he is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance.” God's patience

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is not the same as being passive. It is rather waiting positively with hope like the father waits for the prodigal son. God has been patient in order to make room for as many as possible to come to repentance and turn to Him through faith in Christ. This is why God is longsuffering in his patience. Apostle Paul explained this, saying, "All day long I have held out my hands to a disobedient and obstinate people" (Ro 10:21).

Nevertheless, God's patience doesn't mean that the day of the Lord will not come. Let's look at **verse 10**, "¹⁰But 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 done in it will be laid bare." Peter insists that the day of the Lord will come. That coming will be sudden and without warning. Peter is quoting Jesus Himself here, who promised that He would return as unexpectedly as a thief breaking into an unguarded house in the dead of night. When this day finally comes there will be catastrophic destruction. The sky will disappear in a roar or a whoosh. The elements and heavenly bodies—the building blocks of all life, the beautiful skyscrapers, our lovely homes, the stars, everything—will be consumed by fire. Not only that but all ungodly will be destroyed and done away with. God will judge all mankind. This is scary, right? Even so, God will not destroy everyone. Whoever believes in Jesus as their Lord will be saved. Often, when we hear about the destruction of the current earth even beyond what we see now we fall into hopelessness. In **verse 13**, "¹³But in keeping with his promise we are looking forward to a new heaven and a new earth, where righteousness dwells." Those who God saves look forward to a new heaven and a new earth. This will be the eternal home for those who are saved. Now what? Peter asks in **verse 11a**, "¹¹Since everything will be destroyed in this way, what kind of people ought you to be?" This question is asking how we should live in the last days as we are waiting for the day of the Lord. Let's all read the **key verse 11b-12a**, "¹¹You ought to live holy and godly lives as you look forward to the day of God and speed its coming."

What does it mean to live holy and godly lives?

2 Peter 3:14, "¹⁴So then, dear friends, since you are looking forward to this, make every effort to be found spotless, blameless and at peace with him." A holy life is a life where one is found spotless, blameless and at peace with God. It is a life of discipline, focus, and attention to matters of righteous living. It is a life of living in this world as foreigners in reverent fear of God.

Jesus is a perfect example on what is a holy and godly life. Jesus lived in this world among sinners and committed no sin. Sin is lawlessness. This means that Jesus obeyed the law of God entirely. He did nothing that was contrary to what God commanded Him. Not only that but He was filled with love, love for sinners and did the will of God by teaching many about the kingdom of God. He showed his disciples love. He fed them when they were hungry and washed their feet. He was a servant and was set apart. He even went further in His servanthood to die for undeserving sinners. This is what a holy and godly life is. It is a life of following on Jesus' teachings in what he said and how he lived. This is a life that can allow one to eagerly wait for the day of the Lord. How can one live a holy and godly life as we they await the day of the Lord?

First, we must accept in our hearts that we are sinners, and that Jesus came in flesh and lived among us as a servant and died a substitutionary death for us on the cross so that we can be saved from destruction and on the third day He came back to life(resurrection) and ascended to heaven. We must confess Jesus as our personal Lord and savior from our sinful life. When we do this God says in **Ezekiel 36:25-27**: "²⁵I will sprinkle clean water on you, and you will be clean; I will cleanse you from all your impurities and from all your idols. ²⁶I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit in you; I will remove from you your heart of stone and give you a heart of flesh. ²⁷And I will put my Spirit in you and move you to follow my decrees and be careful to keep my laws." This will allow us to live holy and godly lives. Living a holy and godly life is the evidence that we are truly born again. When we are born again in this way, we should live holy and godly lives. The error of saying Jesus is Lord yet not living a holy and godly life is something that has popped out many times in scripture. It is easy to distort the messages of the servants of God to think that the grace of God is a license for immorality. Let's look at **verse 15-16**, "¹⁵Bear in mind that our Lord's patience means salvation, just as our dear brother Paul also wrote you with the wisdom that God gave him. ¹⁶He writes the same way in all his letters, speaking in them of these matters. His letters contain some things that are hard to understand, which ignorant and unstable people distort, as they do the other Scriptures, to their own destruction." Paul wrote about the grace of Jesus to save sinners but distorting this message leads to destruction. Living this kind of licentious life means that one is not born again because the one who is born again should be striving for righteous living. As such we can strive to live holy and godly lives because we are born again.

We can live holy and godly lives when we remember that a holy and godly life brings joy. There world has done a lot to make us believe that living a holy and godly life does not produce any joy. Perhaps when we see our friends in campus hating those who hate them, we think that should be giving them joy. Why can Jesus say I should forgive them? Or when we see many lying to get away from trouble, we then wonder why is it that I should say the truth and face punishment. And we say surely this is not joy. However, when we live holy and godly lives there is joy. Living a holy and godly life fosters a relationship with God and builds spiritual strength and stability. Living a holy and godly life makes us to be useful for God's purposes and to do any good work of God. Living a holy and godly life glorifies God. It makes many around us to glorify God. Living a holy and godly life builds peace with God. Living a holy and godly life gives us a true-life purpose, which is to glorify God and live for Him all the days of our life. Remembering this joy can make us live holy and godly lives.

Finally, let's look at **verse 18**, "¹⁸But grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To him be glory both now and forever! Amen." We can live holy and godly lives when we grow in the knowledge of our lord and savior Jesus Christ. This we can do by constantly renewing our mind through the word of God. Doing our bible studies consistently, testimony writing, participating in bible reading, prayer and morning devotion. And so many more other ways of consistently reminding ourselves about our Lord and savior Jesus. I believe that I

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was born again in 2011, when I decided to leave my mom's church to join a different church where they were preaching Jesus. One day they gave a radio like device which had some earphones with many sermons in it. It was the first time I had something so nice like a phone, so as a young boy I was very excited and would listen to what they were saying each day. For the longest of times, I was listening because that thing looked cool to me. However, this other day as I was listening, they were speaking on the story of Nicodemus in John 3. It was an interesting story, so I listened. There was a point however where the speaker said, "no one can see the Kingdom of God unless they are born again". That day I wanted to be born again. Eventually after listening to other podcasts and going to church, I heard a message from Romans 10:9 saying, "9 If you declare with your mouth, "Jesus is Lord," and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved." I did that and I thought I was sorted. I continued in sin, living an unholy and ungodly life. I used the mercy of God as a license to commit immorality. I did all sorts of disgusting sins, and I felt no shame because I believed I had prayed a salvation prayer and I was sorted. Starting from sexual immorality watching disgusting adult movies and so on.

However, I finally realized that I am a sinner when I was doing bible studies with shepherd Daniel and my friends in my second year of university. After having repented and confessed my sins before Jesus. I tried my best to live a holy life, a prayerful and bible inspired life. This lasted for about a year and after that I became complacent. This is because I lost focus in that the day of the Lord is coming. I started to slowly live in sin and lie to myself and say that I was falling into sin. I did all sorts of things starting from remaining idle each day and watching unfruitful content. For me to live a holy life they must be filled with the word of God. However, I chose to consume bad stuff that corrupted my mind that I continued to dwell in sin. A life where I do not renew my mind with the word of God and prayer is unholy and ungodly. Jesus was prayerful, He prayed all the time. If indeed I am following on his footsteps, then I should also live a life of prayer and bible studies. I didn't pray as much and could even spend days without doing any bible studies or even bible reading.

I came into the bible house, but I was filled with so much selfishness not prioritizing cooking for the brothers some weeks even if they cook each week. Not being considerate of the brothers, what they will eat is unholy. Jesus washed the feet of His disciples; He fed them when they were hungry. I live where I don't love my brothers is not holy as it doesn't follow on Jesus' teachings. Leaving my space in my room not tidy was also inconsiderate of me towards my brothers. This is unholy and ungodly. When Jesus was asked which is the greatest commandment? He said in Matthew 22:37-40, "37 Jesus replied: "'Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.'³⁸ This is the first and greatest commandment. ³⁹ And the second is like it: 'Love your neighbor as yourself.'⁴⁰ All the Law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments.'" Living a life where I am not considerate of my brothers is lawlessness. A life of lawlessness is an unholy and an ungodly life.

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For me to live in sin was because I forgot about the teaching that the day of God's judgement is coming, and it can arrive anytime, like a thief, unexpectedly and without notice. Peter urges me with the expectation of the day of the Lord to live a holy and godly life, a life that is forever willing and inclined to do what the scripture commands. I am not saying that now that I am a born again and believe this message, I should be perfect. No!!! But that I may forever look at my life and sin with a view that the day of God is coming, and I should be found having believed in Jesus and also holding to all His teachings and obeying His commands, living a holy and godly life. I repent from living a life of error where I do not care that Jesus could come anytime. This is an issue of life and death, living a holy and godly life is life but living an ungodly life is death. I repent of this and pray that I may live each day with this hope for the day of the Lord. Last week I had a dream, and I was crying out to someone with desperation and saying to them repent and accept Jesus. I was talking as if I am seeing Jesus coming down. I pray that I may live this life not just in a dream but that I may devote my life my whole life to this. With fear and trembling sharing the word of God to campus students and anyone I can see.

In conclusion: The fact that God is patient with everyone doesn't mean that His judgement will be delayed forever. In **Verse 10** it says: "10 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 done in it will be laid bare." This will be the most dreadful day in human history. Jesus said "...the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light; the stars will fall from the sky, and the heavenly bodies will be shaken" (Mt 24:29) All human achievements, culture and civilization will vanish. On this day there will be nowhere to hide. Even the darkest sin which is most hidden it will be exposed. This day will come suddenly, unexpectedly, like a thief at night. This means we should more so live holy and godly lives every day because tomorrow is not guaranteed. We can live holy and godly lives when we keep on reminding ourselves the words spoken by God through the bible. When we run away from being scoffers by studying the word of God and believing that the day of the Lord will and can come anytime and any day unexpectedly. Doing this will give us confidence that more so that we are born again we should live spotless, blameless lives before God as evidence that we won't be judged on the day of the Lord.