

“Watch for That Day”
(Matthew 6:10; 2 Peter 3:13)

I. Introduction.

A. Orientation.

1. We have been looking at the second petition, “Your kingdom come.” We’ve seen so far that in it we pray:
 - a. That Christ’s redemptive kingdom would be strengthened and advance.
 - b. That Satan’s kingdom of darkness/evil would be weakened and destroyed.
 - c. That God would gather in His elect, and give them His Spirit to press forward both in their growth in grace and in their service in the kingdom.
 - d. And that He would raise up more workers equipped with truth to labor in the kingdom.

2. Last week, we considered the blessed promise that as we press forward in our race, as we battle with Satan, the world and our flesh, that we will persevere; we will make it, if we have trusted in Christ.
 - a. The Bible says we must persevere, in righteousness, in holiness, if we are to make it to the end.
 - b. We must strive to enter the narrow door; run the race with endurance; be like violent men trying to take a city to enter God’s kingdom.
 - c. But the Bible also reminds us that God will give the strength to His elect to persevere.
 - d. We can know that we are God’s elect when we see the marks of His ownership in our lives; if they are there, we can also know that He is at work in our lives to do this very thing.
 - e. He is working Christ-like graces into our hearts, transforming us into the image of His Son.
 - f. And He promises that the work He has begun in our lives, He will complete (Phil. 1:6).
 - g. We will persevere, because He will preserve us.

B. Preview.

1. This evening, we’ll finish our look at the second petition by looking ahead to the consummate kingdom of God.
 - a. This kingdom existed from the redemption of the very first sinner.
 - b. It existed in the OT, in typological form, but also in reality.
 - c. Christ actually brought the kingdom in His person and work.
 - d. This is the kingdom that is now advancing by His Word and through His Spirit.
 - e. But one day it will reach its culmination, its conclusion, its perfection.
 - f. One day the eternal state will arrive: the Kingdom of Everlasting Righteousness.

g. This is what we'll want to consider now: As we pray "Your kingdom come," we are asking that Christ will return and set up this kingdom.

2. I want us to look at are three things:

- a. First, even though it may look as though it isn't coming, it will: the present heavens and earth *will* one day be destroyed in God's judgment.
- b. Second, Christ will bring in the new heavens and the new earth.
- c. Third, that we ought to be looking for that day as we do what we can to hasten it.

II. Sermon.

A. First, this present heavens and earth *will* one day be destroyed.

1. Peter said that in his day there were those who denied that Christ was coming to bring judgment, which made them bold in their sin.

a. God said there would be those who would deny it.

(i) "This is now, beloved, the second letter I am writing to you in which I am stirring up your sincere mind by way of reminder, that you should remember the words spoken beforehand by the holy prophets and the commandment of the Lord and Savior *spoken* by your apostles. Know this first of all, that in the last days mockers will come with *their* mocking, following after their own lusts, 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'" (vv. 1-4).

(ii) In the last days there would be those who would ridicule the second coming of Christ: if they don't see it, they won't believe it.

(a) Remember, the last days were the days Peter was living in.

(b) Sometimes this referred to the last days before Christ's coming to judge Israel.

(c) Sometimes it is used to refer to the last days before Christ's second coming. This is the case here.

(d) Undoubtedly, there were those in Peter's day, even as today, who laugh at the idea of Christ's return.

(e) They don't see it; things continue as they have for several thousands of years; they don't see His coming and judgment by fire.

(f) How can you prove it?

b. It happened before.

(i) "For when they maintain this, it escapes their notice that by the word of God *the* heavens existed long ago and *the* earth was formed out of water and by water, through which the world at that time was destroyed, being flooded with water" (vv. 5-6).

(ii) The Lord did visit the earth with judgment once.

(iii) He destroyed the world with water: Noah's Flood.

(iv) Here's a very practical application for the importance of proving Noah's Flood actually did happen: it shows that God does visit with universal judgment.

- (v) He destroyed the world once: He can and will do it again.
3. Peter tells us He's going to do it again, but this time through fire.
 - a. "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" (v. 7).
 - b. "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" (v. 10).
 - c. When Christ returns, He will raise the dead and translate the living for judgment.
 - (i) He will come at the end of time.
 - (ii) When all the elect have been gathered in.
 - (iii) And when all of His enemies will have been destroyed.
 - (iv) He will come to vanquish the last enemy: death.
 - (v) "For He must reign until He has put all His enemies under His feet. The last enemy that will be abolished is death" (1 Cor. 15:25-26).
 - (vi) This He will do at the resurrection.
 - d. With the coming of that Day, the Lord will destroy the present heavens and earth.
 - (i) "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!" (v. 12).
 - (ii) Apparently, after He has raised the dead and translated the living, He will bring about this destruction, this purification of the world.
 - (iii) But the point is, it's coming, so we must be ready for it.
 4. There were those who thought the Lord was delaying unnecessarily, that He was neglecting to fulfill this promise. But Peter says they were mistaken: This is because He is patient.
 - a. "But do not let this one *fact* escape your notice, beloved, that with the Lord one day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day. 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" (vv. 8-9).
 - b. God is not bound by time. To Him it is irrelevant: Moses wrote, "For a thousand years in Your sight are like yesterday when it passes by, or *as* a watch in the night" (Psalm 90:4).
 - c. God is not delayed, He is only waiting patiently, until all His elect have been gathered in.
 - d. Once they have, He will send His Son for judgment.
 5. But that day will come suddenly and unexpectedly, like a thief, like His judgment on Jerusalem (at least for those not prepared).

- a. “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” (v. 10).
 - b. It will come when those on the earth are not looking for it, at a time they don’t expect.
 - c. But we are to be like those waiting and watching for their Master to return, so that we are ready.
- B. Second, Christ *will* bring in the new heavens and the new earth.
- 1. He will purify the old creation that He might bring in the new.
 - a. “But according to His promise we are looking for new heavens and a new earth, in which righteousness dwells” (v. 13).
 - b. It doesn’t appear as though the existing Creation will be utterly destroyed or removed from existence, but that it will be purified through fire.
 - c. The new heavens and new earth will emerge from the old.
 - d. The same is true of our bodies.
 - (i) They will be raised and transformed before the destruction of the world.
 - (ii) They are a part of this creation, but not destroyed.
 - (iii) They are only renovated.
 - (iv) So it will be with the world.
 - 2. What will it be like?
 - a. All of the effects of the Fall will be removed: no sickness, pain, suffering, severe cold, heat, famine.
 - b. All of the effects of sin will be removed: no hatred, bitterness, strife, war, best of all no desire for sin.
 - c. God will have scoured all of the wicked off the earth and into the Lake of Fire, along with Satan and his angels.
 - d. It will be a paradise: perhaps all of the creatures will be restored.
 - e. But the greatest part of it will be that we will see God face to face, and be in the presence of the Lamb.
 - f. The Lord will come and bring this blessing, and we will inherit it.
- C. Therefore, lastly, we ought to be looking for that day as we do what we can to hasten it.
- 1. We should be pursuing holiness.
 - a. “Since all these things are to be destroyed in this way, what sort of people ought you to be in holy conduct and godliness” (v. 11).
 - b. We should be striving forward in Christ-likeness and service in the kingdom.
 - 2. We should be looking for that day.
 - a. “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” (v. 12)!
 - b. We should be watching in prayer, ready at all times.
 - c. We should earnestly desire that day to come.

3. We should do what we can to hasten that day (v. 12).
 - a. Through our prayers.
 - b. Through our service.
 - c. Through our giving.

4. We should be diligent to be found in peace, spotless and blameless in Christ (v. 14).
 - a. We should seek the peace of His church.
 - b. We should cleanse ourselves of all sin through faith in Christ.
 - c. We should seek to put on Christ and conform to His image.

5. We should regard His patience to be salvation for ourselves and others (v. 15).
 - a. If He is still waiting, there are still sheep to be brought into the fold.
 - b. He waits to save them: we must go and gather them in.

6. We must be on our guard not to listen to those who ridicule the Second Coming, so that we fall away.
 - a. “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, as also in all *his* letters, speaking in them of these things, in which are some things hard to understand, which the untaught and unstable distort, as *they do* also the rest of the Scriptures, to their own destruction. You therefore, beloved, knowing this beforehand, be on your guard lest, being carried away by the error of unprincipled men, you fall from your own steadfastness, but grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To Him *be* the glory, both now and to the day of eternity. Amen” (vv. 15-18).
 - b. We must not listen to unbelief, the voice of sin, but trust the Lord, giving glory to Him.
 - c. Brethren, let’s watch and pray. That day is coming, whether Christ’s coming in judgment or His coming to take us home. We must be ready, and about our Master’s work.
 - d. Jesus says, “And be like men who are waiting for their master when he returns from the wedding feast, so that they may immediately open *the door* to him when he comes and knocks. Blessed are those slaves whom the master shall find on the alert when he comes; truly I say to you, that he will gird himself *to serve*, and have them recline *at the table*, and will come up and wait on them. Whether he comes in the second watch, or even in the third, and finds *them* so, blessed are those *slaves*” (Luke 12:36-38).
 - e. May God give us the grace to be waiting and watching.