

PETER'S EPISTLES

2 Peter: Spiritually Maturing Opposite Apostasy

VII. Living In View Of God's Final Judgment

(2 Peter 3:10-18)

I. Introduction

- A. In A. D. 66, the year before his martyrdom, Peter desired that fellow believers might mature in the Christian faith in order to combat the rising opposition of heresies that the Church already faced. (Ryrie Study Bible, KJV, 1978, "Introduction to the Second Letter of Peter," p. 1765; Bible Know. Com., N. T., p. 862)
- B. Peter thus wrote this epistle to call believers to spiritual growth in view of increasing apostasy, and 2 Peter 3:10-18 urged believers to live in view of God's final judgment, so we view it for our insight and edification:

II. Living In View Of God's Final Judgment, 2 Peter 3:10-18.

- A. After predicting the rise of uniformitarianism that we now know led to Charles Darwin's theory of evolution and the rise of Marxism that so heavily promotes ungodliness today, and uniformitarianism denies the Biblical teaching of pure creationism and God's judgment of the worldwide Genesis Flood, Peter described the end time destruction of the current universe in God's final judgment after the Millennial Kingdom, 2 Peter 3:10:
 1. The "day of the Lord" in Scripture "describes the end-time events that begin after the Rapture and culminate with the commencement of eternity," and in 2 Peter 3:10, Peter deals only with God's final destruction of the present universe at the end of this "day of the Lord." (Ibid., p. 876-877)
 2. We know from Revelation 20:11-15 that this event occurs at the time of the Great White Throne Judgment where all unsaved people who lived between the Genesis 3 fall of man into sin and the end of the Millennial Kingdom stand before Christ and He judges them to be cast into to the Lake of Fire.
 3. Thus, the "day of the Lord," coming with surprise and catastrophe (Ibid., p. 876), will involve the disappearance of the earth's atmosphere and starry sky with a roar amid great fire that destroys the material of which the universe consists, 2 Peter 3:10a. The earth and its contents "will be laid bare" (*eurethesetai*, Ibid., p. 877; Bruce M. Metzger, A Text. Com. on the Grk. N. T., 1971, p. 705-706), being "exposed for what it really is," Ibid., Bible Know. Com., N. T. In other words, the only thing of value in our earthly lives that will be left is what we believers in Christ have done on this earth that pleased God! (1 John 2:17)
- B. Accordingly, Peter drew an important lesson from this prediction for his readers who would be facing apostates in their earthly lives after his martyrdom, 2 Peter 3:11-13:
 1. Since everything in the current material universe is destined to be "destroyed" (*luo*, Arndt & Gingrich, A Grk.-Eng. Lex. of the N. T., 1967, p. 484-485), Peter rhetorically asked, "What kind of people ought you to be?" (2 Peter 3:11a; Ibid., Bible Know. Com., N. T.) in holiness and godliness, 2 Peter 3:11b ESV. If we wait for and yearn for the coming of the day of the Lord when the heavens will be set on fire and dissolved, the heavenly bodies melting as they burn, it only makes sense that we live in view of what will last beyond the passing of this universe -- what is of eternal value! (2 Peter 3:12 ESV)
 2. In addition, according to God's promise, we look for a new heaven and a new earth in which righteousness dwells, even more motivation to live holy and godly lives in today's world! (2 Peter 3:13 ESV)
- C. Peter's final words to his readers thus charged them to be firm in the truth amid the ungodly, 2 Peter 3:14-18:
 1. He urged his readers who were waiting for the end of the current universe and the institution of the new, righteous one to live sinlessly before God, and to be at peace in their hearts in living this life, 2 Peter 3:14.
 2. Peter's readers were to view the seeming procrastination of Christ's Second Coming that was ridiculed by apostate scoffers simply as divine patience that people might be saved, what Peter added that their beloved brother the Apostle Paul had written in all his epistles according to the wisdom given to him, 2 Peter 3:15.
 3. Peter asserted that Paul wrote of these things in all his epistles, what ignorant and unstable people twisted to their own destruction like they do "the other Scriptures," 2 Peter 3:16 ESV. This statement indicates that all of Paul's writings are God inspired Scripture, just as God inspired as the Old Testament Scriptures!
 4. The readers were thus to avoid being misled by apostates into their errant ideologies, but to grow in grace and in the knowledge of Christ to Whom belonged the glory of God forever, 2 Peter 3:17-18.

Lesson: In view of the coming destruction of the current universe and God's creation of a new one marked by righteousness, we believers in Christ should live righteous lives, the only eternally valuable thing we can do.

Application: In view of the final destinies of this universe and ourselves, may we live righteous lives today.