

before him, craving his mercy (Ephesians 2:8-9). Yet, the decision will have been made in the quiet moments in our daily lives.

In 2 Peter 3, we can find an urgent plea to take the second coming seriously. Peter points the way, if we will listen. Simon Peter is a complex man who comes to 2 Peter with the wisdom of time and experience. His epistles are reminiscent of Ecclesiastes as the aged man shares his scars and the lessons he gained from the battles in his life. Accordingly, readers, who study his life, are able to find a cornucopia of lessons.

A study of Peter's journey allows us to see behind the Scriptures and gain insight into his words. Peter's failings are legendary in Scripture. His impetuosity led him to a host of reprimands from the Lord. His love for Jesus exceeded his wisdom and understanding and he unwittingly stood in the way of the Savior he passionately loved.

First, Jesus taught his disciples about the reality of his death and Peter scolded the Christ (Matthew 16:22). Jesus chastised him for doing the work of Satan by trying to intervene in his heavenly mission.

Second, Peter swore that he would die with the Lord (John 13:37). Nevertheless, Jesus prophesied that Peter would deny Him three times (John 13:38).

When the Roman soldiers came to arrest Jesus, Peter once again stood in the way (John 18:10). Jesus told Peter that his mission was to do the will of

the Father (John 18:11). After Jesus was arrested, Peter denied that he knew Jesus, just as prophesied (Luke 22:54-62). Peter undoubtedly wondered if it was all over for him. If Jesus was dead, then he might never be forgiven.

Apparently he feared the death of Jesus because he might never get Jesus back again. He would be lost forever without his Savior. Later, Jesus visited with Peter and let him know that he would still do great things in the kingdom (John 21).

The failures of Peter's life are still on his mind as he writes his epistles. After the greeting in 1 Peter, he immediately turns to something dear to his heart. Peter understood all too well the necessity of mercy and the resurrection of Jesus. He desperately needed the mercy and grace of Jesus after his sins. Moreover, he was one of the first ones to the empty tomb of Jesus (John 20:1-10). Not surprisingly, Peter is keenly interested in the promise of heaven. When he writes to the persecuted saints in his epistles, he speaks with authority and experience, having spent a good bit of time incarcerated for his faith (Acts 4:3; 5:17-18; 12:3-19).

Advanced in age, he longed to find the rest of heaven (Matthew 11:28-29).

Do we?



The coming day of the Lord (2)
by: Richard Mansel

Peter's urgency is obvious as he begins the final chapter of 2 Peter with an explanation of why he is writing about something familiar to his readers. They knew the importance of the second coming but Peter still wanted to warn them. We should never have the idea that we only need to hear something once. Some complain if the preacher preaches on something they already know. However, we need to be reminded of God's teachings and we are not the only ones in the audience.

First principles are extremely important and the matters under discussion carry even more weight. Amidst persecutions, nothing was more important than the affirmation that Christ would be faithful until the end (Revelation 2:10). Peter's love for his readers is clear as he calls them "beloved," which contrasts with Peter's attacks on the false teachers and mockers in previous verses (2 Peter 3:1,14,17).

Peter addresses the faithful Christians whom he loves. Because of his gentleness, he feels the need to return to the subject close to his heart. His final days are undoubtedly heavy on his heart. Peter knew that the persecution against the Lord's Church would claim his own life, so it was his passion to remain vigilant and vocal in his encouragement to the saints (John 21:18-19). In times of respite and calm, the intricacies of a storm are passé. However, when the wind scatters our picnic, we are suddenly alert.

Facing the persecutions of the day, Peter's audience was undoubtedly interested in Peter's topic at hand. He was in the same place they were – un-

der threat by Satan and his agents. Peter had keen insight into the Man of Darkness (1 John 1:5). Peter had seen his handy work (1 Peter 5:8). As a result, Peter must warn his brethren and encourage them to cling to the Savior.

Peter wanted them to be reminded of Satan and his agents as he continues through the chapter. Scoffers served Satan well in Peter's day as they did to Israel when they were trying to rebuild Jerusalem (Ezra 4:1-5; Nehemiah 4:1-3). The scoffers would claim, "Where is the promise of His coming? For since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of creation." (2 Peter 3:4, NKJV). Nothing has changed today. Nearly two thousand years have passed and Christ has not returned. Accordingly, people become increasingly cynical. Jesus endured mocking and persecution and so shall we (John 15:18-19).

The Christians must ignore their mocking and return to the only undeniable thing they possessed. God's Word will never let them down (Hebrews 13:5; 2 Timothy 3:16-17). Peter directed them back to the Scriptures and the inspired Words of the Lord.

Today, we have the completed canon and can confidently proclaim the promises of God, contained in Scripture, knowing they will come to pass (Psalm 111:7-8).

God, who cannot lie (Titus 1:2), promised that the Lord would return and Peter wanted to build the confidence of the persecuted saints, so their faith would endure to the end.



Sue Anderson 12/22

Kara Hicks 12/22

Geramii Woodrum 12/22

Kristen Morris 01/03

Scott Barnes 1/08

Billy Biter 1/10

Sharon Maxey 1/16

Kim Lively 01/22

Jim Pauley 01/23

Hazel Anderson 01/24

Phyllis Davis 01/26

Prayer List: **Cancer:** Kenneth Dunn; Rhonda Bogus; Rick Campbell; Debbie Boggs; Lowell Crumfield; Barbara Hill; Tammy Hodges; Barbara Francis; Jeff Wiley. **Health problems:** Virgil Steele; Donald Rife; Eugene Holdren; Steve and Pam Poorman's-daughter; Glenna Dempsey; Marlin Harles; Hazel Farr & JR Farr; Jean Walden; Kara Christian;

Rex "Jimmy" Backus; Dosie Branscome & Katie Hensley. Arnold Dempsey; Ken McWilliams; Gene Booth; Wanda Rowe; Diane Haleston; Billy Myers; Zack Holland; **Strokes:** Richard Clement; Amanda Lance. **Other:** Shelby Lindsey-fibromyalgia; Kyle Hockenberry-recovering from military injuries; Betty Bailey-not eating; Brooke Family, Ken McWilliams friend Wolf - eye problems; David Carrico-Leukemia; Lura Durham-dizziness & had to have a pacemaker; Sean Smither-bad car accident; Robin Hodges; Betty Scott- tests; Hazel Anderson-fluid around her heart; Deebra Lagos-issue with her pregnancy; Justin Begil's nephew Payton -meningitis; Whitney Lockman-health problems; Edna Roberts-tumor on thyroid; Kimberly Redden -Spots on lungs; Christine Asbury-home recovering from back surgery; David Allen-surgery on his neck; Caleb Hill -foot and mouth disease; Travis Durham-back problem; Ethan Oliver-Acute Lymphocytic Leukemia. Konner Lively-Mass; Kim Lively-spots on liver; Dominick Collins-blood in his urine; Kara Hicks-MRI; Krista Stowers-tests; Caleb Hill-swollen airway and asthma; Debbie Jones-car accident; Gary Durham; Ken McWilliams-eye and health problems; Johnny Blankenship-health problems; Scott Boyd III- surgery on tumor; Bridget Harrisburg-health problems; Linda Harrison-health/job problems; Mildred Lilly-cancer & needs liver transplant; Cody Sells-health problems; Don Dillon's wife-has cancer; His grandchild is a 6 year old having problems with his mind; David Blankenship-heart attack; Albert Mahon-cancer; Jean Myers-breathing problem-her surgery was postponed so they can do a stress and lung test; **Alzheimer's:** Zella England; Mary Lou Thomas, & Leo Hamby. **Nursing home:** Peggy Barie is in the Loving Hands Adult Care; Ethel Pitzer- Country View Assisted Living; **Military:** Zachary McConnell. Gene 14th anism;

No Bulletin Next 2 Weeks!!!

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Services:
Sunday:
Bible Study: 9:30 AM
Worship: 10:30 AM
Evening: 5:PM
Wednesday: 6:PM

Serving Communion:
Don Hill
Darrell Fletcher
Johnny Pitzer

Attendance:
December 11, 2011
A.M. Worship -
P.M. Worship -
December 14, 2011
Wednesday:

Contribution: \$ 458.00

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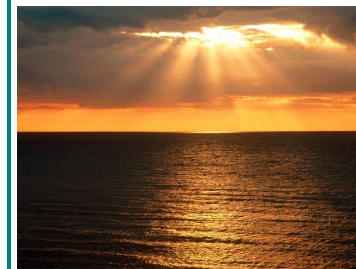
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Church of Christ



Exhorter December 18, 2011



Coming day of the Lord (1) by: Richard Mansel

In an age of uncertainty, hope is the most desirable destination. We need to know that some-

one is in charge and has answers. As the government and experts flail away, hopeless as to what to do, God stands quietly competent. Man's failures are as stark a contrast against God's backdrop of perfection, as can be imagined.

God is the answer, the peace, the prosperity and the promise. However, it cannot be purchased. Man is helpless to obtain it by legal or clandestine means. It lies only in Christ and is found within the pages of Scripture (Romans 10:17). Moreover, the answers we crave come to fruition in the afterlife, where negotiations, schemes, bribery, class order and position cease to exist.

The Lord will be on his throne and we will stand