

INTRO: I distinctly remember a conversation back in the early 90's with a certain co-worker about the 2nd coming of Jesus Christ. **He claimed to believe in Jesus' return... *but convinced himself that IT WOULDN'T HAPPEN IN HIS LIFETIME!*** I wondered at his reasoning for a while until I read this important chapter from the apostle Peter, who explains the mindset of some in the Last Days. – Now for the record, the phrase, “**LAST DAYS**” refers to the entire period of time from the arrival of the Messiah until His return (Acts 2:17; Galatians 4:4; 2 Timothy 3:1; Hebrews 1:2, etc.).

- **Church, if you don't already know it... we are living in the LAST DAYS!**

As last day believers, we should...

I. BE MINDFUL OF GOD'S WORDS (1-7) – Peter first “**Stirs Up**” his readers by **Reminder:** He reminds his readers that they are **Beloved** by both God & the brotherhood. (*Agapetas = dear or esteemed.* – *Some people just need to hear that! It helps us carry on! Peter uses the word 5x's in this chapter!*)

Secondly, his intention is to “**Stir Up**” the **PURE MINDS** of his readers. **Pure** (*eilikrines = unsullied, uncontaminated, or sincere. Found PURE when examined by the sun's light*), which indicated that they were untainted by the lust of the flesh or the tempting influences of this seductive world. (*Stay Pure!*)

Like a father speaking to his own beloved children, Peter tells his readers to BE MINDFUL OF...

A. Words Previously Spoken (2) – “*that you may be mindful of the words which were spoken before by the holy prophets, and of the commandment of us, the apostles of the Lord and Savior.*” – The **Holy Scriptures** record much about God's promised judgment on an ungodly world, beginning as far back as **Enoch (*tt. Jude 14-15).** Also, **various O.T. Prophets:** **Isaiah 2:10-22; Jeremiah 30:7; Daniel 12:1; Joel; Amos 5:18-20; Zephaniah and Zechariah 12:1-14:3).** – **In the New Testament, John** the apostle (Revelation 6-19); **Paul**, in his letters to the Thessalonians; **Peter** in his epistles, and of **course our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ** in (Matthew 24-25).

- In fact, “**Spoken Revelations**” about Christ's return, eschatological judgments and the establishment of everlasting righteousness are the very words that Peter reminds his readers to meditate on! – (*Hold Fast!*)

Peter then warns his readers to BE MINDFUL OF...

B. Words of Scoffers (3-7) – a **SCOFFER** *is one who mocks, ridicules, or scorns the belief of another. One who not only disagrees with an idea, but he also considers himself an ambassador for the opposing idea.* In (v.3), Peter says that we are to “**know this first: that scoffers will come in the last days, walking according to their own lusts,**”⁴ and saying, “Where is the promise of His coming? For since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were

from the beginning of creation.” – Scoffers are the original “haters,” they hate God and the way of Righteousness.

Peter then mentions their characteristics. **BE MINDFUL OF...**

1. **What they DO (3b)** – *Walk in their own lusts.* Know that the root of their skepticism and mockery lies within their ***desire to gratify their own fleshly preferences.*** They deny God’s Word so as **NOT to be accountable**; justifying their sinful behavior (*Jude 17-19 - sensual!*)

- Guzik says, *“They not only have an intellectual problem with God and His word. They also have a clear moral problem, wanting to reject the Lordship of Jesus Christ over their lives.”*

2. **What they SAY (4)** – *Where is the promise of His coming?* They argue that Jesus will not return because, *“For since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of creation.”* – Because they see no changes, they choose not to fear God (**Psalm 55:19**), and with great swelling words they draw others away from truth (**2 Peter 2:1-3**).

3. **What they FORGET (5-6)** – *The CERTAINTY of God’s Word in the past* – *“that by the WORD OF GOD the heavens were of old, and the earth standing out of water and in the water, ⁶by which the world that then existed perished, being flooded with water.* – Peter says that **Last Day Scoffers** are **Willfully Ignorant** of the two most cataclysmic events that ever took place, **CREATION** itself (**Genesis 1:1-2,6,9**) and the **GREAT FLOOD** (**Genesis 6:17; 7:11**).

- **But the Word of the Lord is SURE!** – *I love that (Psalm 33:6-9) provides us with a record the Sovereignty of the Lord in Creation and History. – By the word of the Lord the heavens were made, and all the host of them by the breath of His mouth. He gathers the waters of the sea together as a heap; He lays up the deep in storehouses. Let all the earth fear the Lord; Let all the inhabitants of the world stand in awe of Him. [Why?] For He spoke, and it was done; He commanded, and it stood fast!*

4. **What they IGNORE (7)** – They deliberately ignore what God promised to do in the end! *“But the heavens and the earth which are now preserved by the same word, are reserved for fire until the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men.”* – (More about this later in v. 10)

CLOSING POINT – Peter makes clear that the ***prediction, preciseness, and power of God’s Word will once again come to pass, as judgment will come by fire against all ungodliness in this world. Therefore, we too should take heed to BE MINDFUL of the need of God’s Word in our lives as we live out these Last Days.*** – In (**2 Timothy 3:15**) Paul told Timothy that *“the Holy Scriptures... are able to make you [us] wise for salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus.”*

Peter then mentions that Last Day believers should also...

II. BE MINDFUL OF GOD’S PLANS (8-10) – *Studying God’s Word you will know of His plans!*

A. God’s TIMING (8-9a) – Peter encourages us not to forget this important fact: *“with the*

Lord, one day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years a one day.” – God is outside of time; **God works in time but is not limited to time...** He does not measure time by man’s standard! – However, scoffers consider His delayed return as being “Slack,” (*loitering or late* – *They error in concluding that because He hasn’t come back yet [after all this time] he probably doesn’t exist!*)

B. God’s REASON (9b) – *Impotence* or *slackness* is not reason for the seeming delay, but divine “Patience” or “Longsuffering!” He is patient towards lost sinners because He does not want anyone to be destroyed but wants everyone to repent! (*He offers salvation - John 3:16*)

MAN: Adam–Rapture CHRIST: His Return/7 yr. Honeymoon LORD: Trib.– End of Millennium GOD: Everlasting R / New H&E

C. God’s JUDGMENT (10) – *But the *day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night, in which the heavens will pass away with a great noise, and the elements will melt with fervent heat; both the earth and the works that are in it will be burned up.* – It will begin at the beginning of the Tribulation and end at the conclusion of the Millennium with the **destruction of the heavens and the earth.** *They will pass away! (Rev. 21:1).*

In that case, all the world should BE MINDFUL, because...

- 1. It will come!** – When it comes, “it will come as a thief in the night” (1 Thessalonians 5:2), this is the beginning point of the **Day of the Lord.** (1 Thessalonians 5:3) say’s “For when they say, “Peace and safety!” then sudden destruction comes upon them, as labor pains upon a pregnant woman. And they shall not escape!”
- 2. What will take place when it comes?** – The **heavens will pass away** with a great noise!
 - “**The elements**” are the atomic components into which matter is ultimately divisible, which make up the composition of all created matter. (*All atom parts disintegrate*)
 - **The earth and the works therein** will be utterly burned up – (Isaiah 51:6) “Lift up your eyes to the heavens [“check this out”] and look on the earth beneath. For the heavens will vanish away like smoke, the earth will grow old like a garment, and those who dwell in it will die in like manner; But MY SALVATION will be forever, and My righteousness will not be abolished.”

– *I’m sorry...whose PLANS are these? Not the Scoffers!* – *Once again, God’s purpose will come to pass in His perfect timing!*

CLOSING THOUGHT – Nothing in this world will last forever, **it will all be consumed!** If this is the case, then why do we hold on so tightly to the things of this world? **How should be then live?**

As last day believers, we should...

III. BE MINDFUL OF GODLINESS (11-18) – i.e., How we ought to conduct ourselves in light of God’s promises of judgment and eternity (**read 11-13**). Peter now provides a practical list of what God desires of His beloved children. First off, we should...

A. Be HOLY (11) – Holy conduct is to live separate from sin! (**Psalm 50:23**) *“Whoever offers praise glorifies Me; and to him who orders his conduct aright I will show the salvation of God.”* – Church...make it your aim to **Exercise Godliness** in these last days, which is *Piety* or *living well!* **A life of reverence.** (God knows if we are reverent or not, mankind likewise views it as well).

God also desires of His beloved children to...

B. Be LOOKING/EXPECTANT (12-14a) – This is the **awareness/mindfulness** of the believer. (**Titus 2:13**) *“looking for the blessed hope and glorious appearing of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ,”* (We are to look forward, like a kid going to Disneyland for the very first time!)

- Our Lord promises **something better than Disneyland...** *“a new heavens and a new earth in which righteousness dwells.”* (not re-created but brand new! – w/o the presence of sin!)

C. Be DILIGENT (14b) – *“be diligent to be found in Him in peace...”* – i.e., **without worry or fear** that you’re not ready when the Lord returns (i.e., in full assurance of faith: **1 John 4:17**). *“Love has been perfected among us in this: that we may have boldness in the day of judgment; because as He is [Jesus], so are we in this world.”* (be diligent to live like Jesus!)

- We are to be found **without Spot & Blameless** in the eyes of the Lord – This is the opposite of the false teachers mentioned in **(2:13)** who **ARE** spots and blemishes.

D. Be CONSIDERATE (15a) – *“considering that the longsuffering of our Lord is salvation.”* (for others); meaning, that **we should take part in God’s plan of salvation for all,** as we fulfill the “Great Commission” (**Matthew 28:19-20**).

E. Be INFORMED (15b-16) – Here, Peter supports Paul’s writings as being **likewise inspired by God**, as the Holy Spirit God gave him wisdom. Yet again, scoffers will **“TWIST”** his words along with other scriptures; which will lead to their destruction!

F. BEWARE! (17) – Peter now provides his final warning for his readers... *“You therefore, beloved, since YOU KNOW THIS BEFOREHAND, **BEWARE lest you FALL from your own steadfastness, being led away with the error of the wicked.**”* – The word **“BEWARE”** is used 20 times in 18 verses in the N.T.(Expound) – I like the **NLT translation rendering of (v.17),** *“You already know these things, dear friends! So be on guard; then you will not be carried away by the errors of these wicked people and lose your own secure footing.”* (**2 Peter 3:17 NLT**)

- Elsewhere the apostle Paul tells us that, *“...we should no longer be children, tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, in the cunning craftiness of deceitful plotting,”* (**Ephesians 4:14**)
- Anytime a believer seriously listens to a false teacher, he runs the risk of being led astray. – (**Hebrews 3:14**) tells us that *“we have become partakers of Christ IF we hold the beginning of our confidence steadfast to the end,”*

G. Be GROWING (18) – Peter ends his Last Day Reminders with the same thought which he began: *“Grow in Grace and knowledge...”* (**2 Peter 1:2-11**) – (Expound/Exhort/Conclude)

CLOSING POINT – Be Mindful of Godliness in these Last Days! Peter’s reminders can help us to retain a **PURE MIND**, until our Lord’s Return. I will end with Jude’s exhortation (Jude 21) “keep yourselves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life...”