

Water ... Fire

Services: Sunday, 12/10 at 8:00 & 10:45

Church Year: Second Sunday in Advent – 2017

During Advent: Wednesday Services at 11 & 7; Meals at 12 & 6

Introduction: Dear friends in Christ: Have you become comfortable in your sin? Have you forgotten about the end of the world? Are you living for *this life* rather than *the life to come*? This sermon includes some important reminders, the end of the world, and what should be going on in our lives between now and then.

1. **Important Reminders:** ¹This is now the second letter that I am writing to you, beloved. In both of them I am stirring up your sincere mind by way of reminder, ² that you should remember the predictions of the holy prophets and the commandment of the Lord and Savior through your apostles, // So what is a *sincere Christian mind*? Dr. Kretzmann gave this answer:
A “mind which is always open to instruction and admonition from the Word of God.”
 - a. Scoffers will come: ³ knowing this first of all, that scoffers will come in the last days with scoffing, following their own sinful desires. ⁴ They will say, “Where is the promise of his coming? For ever since the fathers fell asleep, all things are continuing as they were from the beginning of creation.” // Scoffers tend to be intelligent and important people, so others are

tempted to listen to them. When they say that “all things are continuing as they were,” they deny the reality of the worldwide flood. Such denials are common today, even though there is MUCH EVIDENCE to prove the worldwide flood! All such denials should remind us that we are living in the last days!

- b. Facts will be overlooked: ⁵ **For they deliberately overlook this fact, that the heavens existed long ago, and the earth was formed out of water and through water by the word of God, ⁶ and that by means of these the world that then existed was deluged with water and perished. // And why do many deny obvious facts about †God creating, †the worldwide flood, and †the end of the world? They are trying to *eliminate* God and His ways, so they can ✓*follow* their own ways and ✓*feel comfortable* about doing so!**
- c. Fire will come: ⁷ **But by the same word the heavens and earth that now exist are stored up for fire, being kept until the day of judgment and destruction of the ungodly. // Unbelievers say: **No** God, **no** creation, **no** flood, **no** fire, **no** judgment; however, *God’s Word, the Bible makes it clear that ALL FIVE are YES!* So let us always remember and believe all such things!**

2. **The End of the World:**

- a. The timing: ⁸ **But do not overlook this one fact, beloved, that with the Lord one day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one**

day.⁹ **The Lord is not slow to fulfill his promise as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing that any should perish, but that all should [go forward to] repentance. //**

We in this world are bound by time, *but the Lord exists outside of time*, so what seems long to us – *regarding His promised return* – is not long to Him. Furthermore, He has a very good purpose for delaying – *so that when He comes more are found to be repentant*, thus sorry for their sins and trusting in Him!

- b. The shock:¹⁰ **But the day of the Lord will come like a thief, and then the heavens will pass away with a roar, and the heavenly bodies will be burned up and dissolved, and the earth and the works that are done on it will be [burned up]. //**

Think about thieves: dumb ones announce when they are coming, *but smart ones come when they are least expected*. As most are not ready for a thief, *so most are not ready for Jesus!* But why not? In many cases, they are so busy with this temporary world *that they are not thinking about Jesus' return*. And what is keeping them so busy? Temporary things – like ♦working to make money, ♦shopping online, ♦fixing the car, or ♦remodeling the house; *all such things will be burned up when Jesus returns!*

3. **Between Now and Then:**

- a. The future should influence our present:¹¹ **Since all these things are thus to be dissolved, what sort of people ought you [is it necessary for you] to**

be in lives of holiness and godliness,¹² waiting for and hastening the coming of the day of God, because of which the heavens will be set on fire and dissolved, and the heavenly bodies will melt as they burn! // Since God has blessed us to know the truth, *we know* ♦ *this world is temporary and* ♦ *fire is coming*; therefore, as we wait for Jesus to come, *we ought to live lives that are pure and godly.*

- b. Most important is to be FOUND IN JESUS:¹³ **But according to his promise we are waiting for new heavens and a new earth in which righteousness dwells.**¹⁴ **Therefore, beloved, since you are waiting for these, be diligent to be found by him [in peace]** [*in a saving relationship with Him*], **without spot or blemish.** // Since – *as sinners* – we cannot make peace with God, we are filled with joy because **HE HAS MADE PEACE WITH US** through JESUS! Therefore, through Jesus, and ONLY through Jesus – *through His holy life, His innocent suffering, and His sacrificial death* – we are †forgiven, †at peace with God, and †holy in His sight! So, may ♦the joy of forgiveness and ♦the promise of the new heaven and the new earth *encourage us to live lives of holiness and godliness as we await Jesus' return!*

Conclusion: Let us pray: Dear Father, as You sent water in Noah's day, You will send fire at the end, so keep us ever-ready through Jesus!

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