

2 Peter 3:11-18(ESV) ¹¹Since all these things are thus to be dissolved, what sort of people ought you to be in lives of holiness and godliness, ¹²waiting 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! ¹³But according to his promise we are waiting for new heavens and a new earth in which righteousness dwells. ¹⁴Therefore, beloved, since you are waiting for these, be diligent to be found by him without spot or blemish, and at peace. ¹⁵And count the patience of our Lord as salvation, just as our beloved brother Paul also wrote to you according to the wisdom given him, ¹⁶as he does in all his letters when he speaks in them of these matters. There are some things in them that are hard to understand, which the ignorant and unstable twist to their own destruction, as they do the other Scriptures. ¹⁷You therefore, beloved, knowing this beforehand, take care that you are not carried away with the error of lawless people and lose your own stability. ¹⁸But 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.

Grace to you and peace from God our Father and our Lord and Savior Jesus the Christ.

Amen.

The reason Jesus has not returned yet to put an end to all sin, evil, suffering, and death is God is exercising his holy patience, giving more time for people to repent not wanting any to perish. If Jesus were to come today there are people who would not go to heaven because they are yet to be saved. The Gospel will be spread to every tribe and nation and then the end will come Jesus tells us (Matthew 24:14). You may have children or grandchildren who do not know Jesus. You are praying for them and asking God to save them. Patience is waiting on God, giving time for God to act. Therefore, God is being patient with this world, and we are to be patient with God, living by faith in God knowing God will accomplish His will in God's timing which is seldom if ever our timing. God is incapable of doing anything wrong so if we disagree with God guess who is right. Having said that I have heard so many many times these words. "I wish Jesus would come soon." And to that we say, "Amen" may it be so.

A week or so ago the flight that I was on was descending to a safe landing. I knew we were close to O'Hare because we were no longer over Lake Michigan. I could tell by the quietness of the engine that we were about to touch down. Suddenly the engines were as loud as ever and instead of descending the pilot pulled straight up with lots of power. He decided to

about the landing and go around. For a split second the sudden feel of power was a little disconcerting. I have spent hours watching the show "air disasters" on the Smithsonian channel. The captain spoke and told us the weather had changed rather quickly as did the direction of the wind and it was best to go around and land at a different runway and that we did. All of us on the plane knew we were on a waiting cycle, a holding pattern, and would be in the air until it was our turn to land. In one way we were in the captain's waiting room.

God is moving this entire world, the entire universe to His end. We wish He would land the plane now, meaning let Jesus land now on this earth. But God has seen fit to wait. God is operating at full power, lifting us up closer to Himself. It is up to us as Christians not to lose heart, grow discouraged, or be overcome by the evil of our day. We rest in God, live safely in God with God's seat belt of truth around us that will keep us steady, full of faith and peace until the day of Jesus Christ. God knows the best time and way to land the plane, to end history as we know it.

The worst landing I ever experienced was in Milwaukee. The jumbo jet was bouncing all over the place and it was frightening. Walking past the captain I said rather bluntly, "Did you ever think about going around?" The first officer felt the tension and said, "He always has that as a choice." I told my pilot son what I said, and Taylor chewed me out royal. "Dad, don't ever say that again." So now I say to every captain, "that was the best landing I have ever experienced, and my pilot son is proud of his dad for saying that.

God our pilot has everything on course. We may not agree with God's course, but God says, "You are in my waiting room and I am taking you exactly where I want you to be." "Don't lose heart." God may be taking your life on some turns you do not like but God never needs your approval to do what God must do. God sees the end and the end is in sight. Meanwhile we wait. The Bible says they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength (Isaiah 40:31). The world is not spinning out of control. What we see today was written, was predicted long

ago. God's Word is coming through louder and clearer than ever to those who open it and read it.

I must say this. In times of hardship and tribulation God has a rather unique way of humbling us, showing us how dependent on God we truly are. God lets us know that there is no one more trustworthy than God. During times of hardship and tribulation our emotions may be all over the place, like a rough plane ride, but God asks of us to fly, to live by His instruments, not by how we feel. Pilots can lose all sense of direction. The plane may be ascending but it feels as if it is descending. I have been told that there are certain aircrafts that can be flying upside down and you do not know it. You have to your full trust into the flying instruments and not what you feel in the seat of your pants or your emotions. By trusting and believing in the truthfulness of God's Word, God's great instrument for us to live by, the plane will not crash and will have a safe landing. Our emotions can lie to us. God cannot. The Bible says, "Humble yourself in the sight of the Lord and He will pick you up, He will lift you up" (James 4:10).

James 4:6(ESV) ⁶But he gives more grace. Therefore it says, ⁴"God opposes the proud, but gives grace to the humble."

In God's waiting room, waiting for this earth and the heavens to be dissolved by fire, what type of people are we to be. Holy, Holy, Holy, and godly, godly, godly. It is my belief that one of the most important steps into holiness and godliness is being utterly humble before God. To be humble is to let God be God in your life, putting God on the throne so to speak and for you and me to kneel before God our maker. We kneel our very lives before God. We bow down to God in utter adoration and praise. We acknowledge that apart from God we can do nothing. Apart from God we are absolutely useless. To be humble before God is to walk away from our sinful ways onto the path of holiness and righteousness. The Bible says without holiness no one will see the Lord. When we are humble before God, God honors that. God fills us with His Presence, and we shine ever brighter for Christ. When we are humble before God we can

clearly see people around us who need God in their lives, and we pray for them with great humility and may even befriend them being a servant of Christ.

This may sound strange, but it is true. The other day I saw a police officer pull off the road and I followed him. I walked up to him slowly and asked to pray with him and he said yes. Friends, I do not walk up to the police thinking I'm someone great. I'm not super Christian out to do a fantastic work for this church. No, I walk up humbly fulling expecting them to say no. I walk up as person who wants to serve them and encourage them in the Lord Jesus Christ. I do not say, "Here I am, Mr. America." No, I walk up and ask the question, "Would you please let me pray for you." Humility in our lives opens doors for ministry like nothing else. It leads to holy and godly living. We are following the instrument of God's word, God's guidance system and not our own fallible emotions. My son has landed safely in terrible fog with little or no visibility because he trusted in the instruments. God's Word cannot nor will it ever fail. In these tough times God is humbling us, crucifying our arrogances, so he can pick us up and use us as never before, living holy and godly lives until the day of Jesus Christ, waiting patiently on God. For when we are weak, He is strong. God is our strength. The weaker we are the more of His strength we will have. I believe God is preparing our lives for even more difficult times.

¹⁴Therefore, beloved, since you are waiting for these, be diligent to be found by him without spot or blemish, and at peace. I received a phone call this week from someone suffering terribly with PTSD. The riots in our cities brings back to these veterans the acts of terrorism they witnessed in Iraq and Afghanistan. It is killing them on the inside to see such behavior near their homes. The person I was talking to had lost his sense of peace and joy in the Lord Jesus Christ and was asking for help. I love this person deeply and my heart went out to him. The conversation lasted at least 30 minutes. In these last days that we are in, many of us are losing our inner sense of God's peace and joy that. We question God to the core and may even doubt God's existence. I listened to my friend at great length express his pain. I spoke of the Apostle

Paul, one of the most persecuted Christians ever, who was stoned, left for dead, stood up, and did ministry the following day. He endured faithfully unto the end. My friend is suffering from moral injury. His very spirit has been badly bruised by war. He is bleeding all over the place. In prayer we asked God for a new infilling of God's perfect love. I honestly believe what heals PTSD is God's love filling the very soul of these vets over and over and over again. God's holy love enables them to accept themselves and all they have been through. My friend is rather short so I said, "It will take less of God's love to fill you since your so short." He laughed hard and said, "That's why I called you. You know how to make me laugh." We've been friends since the 8th grade. My son Johnny says, "Dad, I can't believe someone would like you that long."

How are we to live until that day as God pilots this world to that last day. We are in God's waiting room. It is no time to grow proud and arrogant. We live holy obedient lives, showing that we belong to Christ. We do our work as unto the Lord Jesus Christ. If you were arrested for being a Christian, will there be enough evidence to convict you? Godliness comes our way as we live humbly before God, always acknowledging our dependence upon Him. We show a family resemblance that we are rightly related to Jesus.

My son was so angry with me for questioning the pilot. You are seated in God's waiting room with the belt of truth, God's word containing His flight plan, holding you in place. Please do not do what I did and arrogantly question God's abilities. It is better to pray, "Father, forgive us for we did not know what you were doing." Humility before God is the only way to fly. Amen and Amen.

P.S. I hope to have more concluding comment on 2nd Peter next week Lord willing.