

2 Peter 3:1-18 (NLT2) ¹ This is my second letter to you, dear friends, and in both of them I have tried to stimulate your wholesome thinking and refresh your memory. ² I want you to remember what the holy prophets said long ago and what our Lord and Savior commanded through your apostles. ³ Most importantly, I want to remind you that in the last days scoffers will come, mocking the truth, and following their own desires. ⁴ They will say, "What happened to the promise that Jesus is coming again? From before the times of our ancestors, everything has remained the same since the world was first created." ⁵ They deliberately forget that God made the heavens by the word of his command, and he brought the earth out from the water and surrounded it with water. ⁶ Then he used the water to destroy the ancient world with a mighty flood. ⁷ And by the same word, the present heavens and earth have been stored up for fire. They are being kept for the day of judgment, when ungodly people will be destroyed. ⁸ But you must not forget this one thing, dear friends: A Day is like a thousand years to the Lord, and a thousand years is like a day. ⁹ The Lord isn't really being slow about his promise, as some people think. No, he is being patient for your sake. He does not want anyone to be destroyed but wants everyone to repent. ¹⁰ But the day of the Lord will come as unexpectedly as a thief. Then the heavens will pass away with a terrible noise, and the very elements themselves will disappear in fire, and the earth and everything on it will be found to deserve judgment. ¹¹ Since everything around us is going to be destroyed like this, what holy and godly lives you should live, ¹² looking forward to the day of God and hurrying it along. On that day, he will set the heavens on fire, and the elements will melt away in the flames. ¹³ But we are looking forward to the new heavens and new earth he has promised, a world filled with God's righteousness. ¹⁴ And so, dear friends, while you are waiting for these things to happen, make every effort to be found living peaceful lives that are pure and blameless in his sight. ¹⁵ And remember, the Lord's patience gives people time to be saved. This is what our beloved brother Paul also wrote to you with the wisdom God gave him— ¹⁶ speaking of these things in all of his letters. Some of his comments are hard to understand, and those who are ignorant and unstable have twisted his letters to mean something quite different, just as they do with other parts of Scripture. And this will result in their destruction. ¹⁷ I am warning you ahead of time, dear friends. Be on guard so that you will not be carried away by the errors of these wicked people and lose your own secure footing. ¹⁸ Rather, you must grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. All glory to him, both now and forever! Amen.

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

Amen.

This world will not end until God steps in and creates a brand-new earth and a brand-new heaven. **1. This earth and the heavens will be destroyed by the hand of God. 2. The brand-new earth and the new heavens will come together instantly for God is all powerful and does not need millions of years to accomplish what He can do immediately.** The timetable of all things coming to an end has already been set. It is not something for us to become

anxious about, fret about, worry about, lose sleep about, get discouraged by, or fall into the debts of despair. It is actually something to look forward to. God will be our God and we will be His people. I pray the end would come soon. “Come quickly Lord Jesus, please come soon.” “Please hasten the day.”

No one needs to lose any sleep due to climate change. **3. Human beings will not bring about this world’s end. Rest Assured, God will.** It will come like a thief in the night at the most unexpected of times. The righteous will be separated from the unrighteous, the wheat from the chaff, the sheep from the goats. Yes, the day of judgment will come. The entire universe has to be redone due to the corruption of the fall when Adam and Eve sinned. All corruption and evil will be destroyed, burned with fire. All will be made brand new. Sin and evil will be done forever and ever.

2 Thessalonians 1:7-10 (NLT2) 7 And God will provide rest for you who are being persecuted and also for us when the Lord Jesus appears from heaven. He will come with his mighty angels, 8 in flaming fire, bringing judgment on those who don’t know God and on those who refuse to obey the Good News of our Lord Jesus. 9 They will be punished with eternal destruction, forever separated from the Lord and from his glorious power. 10 When he comes on that day, he will receive glory from his holy people—praise from all who believe. And this includes you, for you believed what we told you about him.

Matthew 25:46 (ESV) 46 And these will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal life.”

Here are a few recent headlines. “I am terrified the world is coming to an end.” “Voters go to the polls on a rainy day in California.” The article insinuates that if the votes do not go their way, one political party will not only bring an end to democracy, but to the entire world. Friends, that is Satan’s lie. Yes, the end will come only according to God’s timetable and not by a politician or political party.

“Will The World End In 2068?” It is an article predicting an asteroid will hit the earth and all will be destroyed. I recently watched a movie where this occurs and found it to be quite provoking. Listen to the Word of the Lord. **Genesis 8:22 (ESV) 22 While the earth remains, seedtime and harvest, cold and heat, summer and winter, day and night, shall not cease.**” The world is coming to an end, the entire universe is, but it is the power and display of God that brings it about and all according to God’s perfect timetable.

There are a rash of movies consumed with this theme of the world ending. And when I attend these movies, all I see on the screen is the epitome of despair, lives being lived without any thought of God. Paul wrote this 2000 years ago and I wish I could publish this verse in every school across America, from prekindergarten through grad- school, where our young people are sinking into despair, anxiety, and depression. **Colossians 2:8 (NLT2) 8 Don’t let anyone capture you with empty philosophies and high-sounding nonsense that come from human thinking and from the spiritual powers of this world, rather than from Christ.**

I do believe there is a hell that will exist at the day of judgment. **4. But hell today is not necessarily a physical location as much as a spiritual existence of living without God’s love, God’s peace, God’s kindness, God’s goodness.** When your foundation is on sinking sand, there is no where to go but down. When Christ is your foundation, when Christian faith resides in your soul, you can stand firmly, solidly, strongly, confidently no matter what crazy thoughts and teaching comes from the pit of unbelief in order to deceive you and lead you astray. **5. A sign of the end times is many will be led astray due to the fact that they love their acts of sin, acts of unrighteousness more than they love Jesus and God’s truth found in the Bible.** **6. The extra ordinary amount of fear, anxiety, and depression these days is a result of people ignoring God and God’s ways.** When this occurs, down we go. On the other hand, nothing is happening today that surprises God. History is unfolding and God knows exactly what He is doing whether you agree with God or not. God is not looking for our

help running the universe. Panic, debilitating fears occur when we take our eyes off of our God who is loving, merciful, kind, gracious, and slow to anger. We need never fear the end. It is something to look forward to. We have eternity in front of us and corruption and evil will be burned out of existence forever. Political parties will not bring in the end. Human beings will not bring in the end. God will and the end will be very good for those who belong to Jesus. It will be a terrible and wonderful day. Terrible for those who rejected God and wonderful for those who belong to God.

It could be this sense of dread of the future pervasive in our society is God's quiet work of trying to get people ready to meet their Maker. God does not want anyone to perish. God does not enjoy the death of the wicked. God wants all saved. Could it be that God is using this time as a season to wake people up to the reality of Jesus and eternal life in heaven? Jesus is the only answer to the panic of our day. If the end is in sight, it is time to get right with God before it is too late. Our nation is in desperate need of a work of God.

I hurt for our young people who are living in a time where hope is no longer in the air. 911 did a number on them. They have seen the demise of the political process, especially in Washington D.C. Right or wrong, so many of them see capitalism as not functioning well and they tend toward socialism. When it comes to sexual issues, the standards that God has set up in Scripture no longer applies. When happiness in life becomes a person's aim, it is like shooting in the dark. They may achieve exactly what they thought would make them happy, but discover they are not happy at all. You cannot achieve from this world what can only be found in God. Our souls crave God and the love and joy that God gives. Our souls crave truth, truth that sets us free and this is only found in the Word of God and the living Word, Jesus.

1 Peter 1:14-18 “¹⁴And so, dear friends, while you are waiting for these things to happen, make every effort to be found living peaceful lives that are pure and blameless in

his sight. ¹⁵ And remember, the Lord's patience gives people time to be saved. ¹⁸ Rather, you must grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ."

As your pastor I want you to hear these words. All of us need to go to God's Gym and have a daily workout. No matter how much faith you have in Christ, little or great, the days are here when living in a total trust relationship with Jesus that brings peace is now what life is all about. Your walk with God, please push it to the front burner of your life. In God's gym, doing spiritual exercises every day, you will have the inner strength from God that is necessary to thrive no matter what happens outside of you. In God's gym your faith is strengthened, and God produces within you fantastic hope that never gives up. To the non-believer, they may read the events of the day and fall into complete despair. To the believer, you might think, "this falls into line with what was predicted long ago." God is moving history the way God wants it to move. May the name of the Lord be praised. God is the giver of hope. God is the giver of peace. God is the giver of joy. And God has given us his workout plan to strengthen us for these days.

Prayer, Bible study, Worship, Christian Fellowship, Fasting, Holy Communion, Repentance and Confession of Sin, Prayer Meetings with other believers, and practicing the spiritual gifts God have been given to you. These are God's way of giving you the inner strength to shine brightly for Christ in this dark world. This way the cares of this world will not overcome you; you will overcome them. **1 John 5:4-5 (ESV) ⁴ For everyone who has been born of God overcomes the world. And this is the victory that has overcome the world - our faith. ⁵ Who is it that overcomes the world except the one who believes that Jesus is the Son of God?** Amen and Amen.