

“The Return of Christ: A Warning to Skeptics”
Grow in Grace and Knowledge — Part 6
2 Peter 3:1-10

1. God’s Word is true.

Dear friends, this is now my *second* letter to you. I have written both of them as reminders to stimulate you to wholesome thinking. I want you to recall the words spoken in the past by the holy prophets and the command given by our Lord and Savior through your apostles. *2 Peter 3:1-2*

And do this, understanding the present time. The hour has come for you to wake up from your slumber, because our salvation is nearer now than when we first believed. The night is nearly over; the day is almost here. So let us put aside the deeds of darkness and put on the armor of light.

Romans 13:11-12

2. Why do scoffers deny the Second Coming?

First of all, you must understand that in the last days scoffers will come, scoffing and following their own evil desires. They will say, "Where is this 'coming' he promised? Ever since our fathers died, everything goes on as it has since the beginning of creation." *2 Peter 3:3-4*

Definition: A scoffer is someone who takes lightly what ought to be taken seriously.

Why do these scoffers scoff?

They want to continue doing their own thing.

They want to selectively view the past and use that view to predict the future.

3. Don’t forget the Creator and Judge.

But they deliberately forget that long ago by God's word the heavens existed and the earth was formed out of water and by water. By these waters also the world of that time was deluged and destroyed. By the same word the present heavens and earth are reserved for fire, being kept for the day of judgment and destruction of ungodly men. *2 Peter 3:5-7*

For he spoke, and it came to be; he commanded, and it stood firm.

Psalms

33:9

For by him all things were created: things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities; all things were created by him and for him. He is before all things, and in him all things hold together.

Colossians 1:16-17

But I tell you that men will have to give account on the day of judgment for every careless word they have spoken. Matthew 12:36

But because of your stubbornness and your unrepentant heart, you are storing up wrath against yourself for the day of God's wrath, when his righteous judgment will be revealed. Romans 2:5

4. Don't forget the patience of God.

But do not forget this one thing, dear friends: With the Lord a day is like a thousand years, and a thousand years are like a day. The Lord is not slow in keeping his promise, as some understand slowness. He is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance.

2 Peter 3:8-9

5. Don't forget the warning of Christ and the prophets.

But the day of the Lord will come like a thief. The heavens will disappear with a roar; the elements will be destroyed by fire, and the earth and everything in it will be laid bare.

2 Peter 3:10

Note: The “*Day of the Lord*” was not invented by the Apostles. The prophets of the Old Testament taught it and so did our Lord Jesus Christ.

Check out: Isaiah 13:9-11; Jeremiah 30:7; Joel 1-3; Amos 5; Zephaniah 1-3; Zechariah 12-14.

“**The Day of the Lord**”—is that period of judgment that climaxes with the return of Christ.

“**The Day of God**”—is that day when God's people enjoy the new heavens and new earth. (2 Peter 3:12)

“**The Day of Christ**”—relates to the Coming of Christ for His Church. (1 Corinthians 1:7-9; Philippians 1:10 and 2:16)

But understand this: If the owner of the house had known at what time of night the thief was coming, he would have kept watch and would not have let his house be broken into. So you also must be ready, because the Son of Man will come at an hour when you do not expect him. Matthew 24:43-44

Application: The return of Christ will continue to be attacked, denied and misapplied. But it stands as sure as the word of Christ, the apostles and the prophets. It will be fulfilled and it is a

source of hope and encouragement to the heart fixed on Jesus Christ. What do we do as we wait for Christ's glorious appearing?

For the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men. It teaches us to say "No" to ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright and godly lives in this present age, while we wait for the blessed hope—the glorious appearing of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ, who gave himself for us to redeem us from all wickedness and to purify for himself a people that are his very own, eager to do what is good.

Titus 2:11-14

Don't

dress in white and wait on a roof
set dates
fret the skeptics

Do

get your act together (*Live every day as if it were your last, to the glory of God.*)
work diligently in your home, on your job and in your church (*Live as if He isn't coming for another 15 years.*)
shake out salt everywhere you go (*Make a lifestyle of directing people to the kinds of questions that only Christ can answer.*)
share Christ with everyone who will listen.

"The Return of Christ: A Warning to Skeptics" is sixth in a series titled, "Growing in Spiritual Knowledge." February 16, 2014.
All verses are from the New International version unless noted.