



Old Testament Reading – Psalm 33:12-22

New Testament Reading – Jude 1:1-25

How Should We Then Live # 1 “The Search for Authentic Christianity” 2 Peter 3:1-17

In many ways, the culture we live today is much like the culture in which Christians lived in Peter’s day.

- In 1 Peter 1:1-2, Peter referred to the Christians to whom he was writing as “pilgrims” or “aliens” – those who, because of their expressed faith in Jesus Christ, did not fit in with their culture.
- **In his first epistle**, Peter urged his readers regarding the persecution they were enduring, primarily from the Roman government.
- **In his second epistle**, Peter urged his readers regarding the dissension they were enduring, primarily from the false teachers and truth deniers who had infiltrated into their assemblies.

The question, **“How Should We Then Live,”** was asked and answered by the Christian Philosopher, Dr. Francis Schaeffer.

- In the mid- '70s, Schaeffer tried to warn the leaders of the evangelical church about the future clash between secular humanism and liberal theology.
- While his warnings were not heeded, and his appeal for a revival of biblical theology was not heard, the clash of the worldviews became a merger of liberal theology blended with secular humanism, which gave birth to what we know today as progressive Christianity.
 - In 2 Timothy 3:5, the Apostle Paul defined this as a **“Form of godliness but denying its power.”**
- **Cultural or Progressive Christianity** exalts man and requires nothing of man to be a follower of Christ than one’s verbal profession of faith.
- **Biblical or Authentic Christianity** exalts Christ and requires those who believe in Him to deny themselves, take up their cross daily, and surrender the leadership of their lives to Him.
- With the rapture of the Church imminent and realizing how significant our witness is to the salvation of those who are yet to be saved, the question that should occupy the mind of every Christian and serve as the qualifier for every life decision is, **“How Should We Then Live?”**
 - 1 Peter – be patient with those who persecute us, **“For Christ also suffered, leaving us an example that we should follow in His steps.”**
 - 2 Peter – to defeat the heretics by continuing to **“Grow in the grace and knowledge of the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.”**
- Many Christians now regret not heeding Peter’s warnings, and their church has been taken over by unprincipled men who know nothing of the grace and knowledge of the Lord.
- In the name of “reaching a new generation,” churches that were once lighthouses for the lost and equipping centers for the saved are now gathering places for false worship, and the instruction in a false gospel.
- Realizing where we are on God’s prophetic timetable and that the Day of His judgment is near, Peter asked, **“What manner of persons ought you to be in holy conduct and godliness.”**

Just as there was a time when God created everything that exists in the world today, so He has already established the time when He will dissolve everything He has created.

- The “Day of the Lord” will begin after the rapture of the Church, extend through the seven years of Tribulation, and end at the end of the Millennium with God’s final judgment.
- However, as it was in Peter’s Day, so it is today, very few people believe in the rapture or the physical return of Christ, including many who claim to be Christians.
- In 2 Peter 3:10, Peter referred to these truth deniers as “scoffers,” whose life goal is to satisfy their lusts.
- Peter said they scoffed at the idea of the “Day of the Lord” because of:
 - **Their prideful ridicule** – such things would never happen because it would make this life meaningless.
 - **Their prideful morality** – they want to live their life the way they wanted to without any accountability.
 - **Their prideful ignorance** – because nothing like this has happened since creation, it won’t happen.

Peter responded to the scoffers with:

1. The Defense of Scripture – 2 Peter 3:1-2 –

- Scoffers believe the Scriptures are intended to show them how to have their best life here on this earth.
- Peter said the whole purpose of the Scriptures is to assure mankind that God would send His Son to be our Savior, that He would

establish His kingdom upon this earth, and that the day would come when God would judge those who failed to believe Him and receive Jesus Christ as their Savior and Lord.

2. The Defense of History – 2 Peter 3:5-6 –

- Scoffers forget that there was a time when the world did not exist – that God created the world and everything that is in it.
- Scoffers forget that God judged the world through the flood – that He released the fountains from the deep and the rain from the skies, and every living thing was destroyed.
- Peter said God is now preserving the heavens and the earth for the day of judgment when it will be destroyed by fire.
- Scoffers forget the example of Sodom and Gomorrah.

3. The Defense of Eternity – 2 Peter 3:8ff –

- Even though it had only been less than 30 years since Jesus' resurrection and ascension, Peter admonished his readers to live each day in anticipation of the Lord's return.
- God the Father has set the time when He will tell His Son to go get "His Bride," but to them, it isn't a matter of time – to them, a day is as a thousand years and a thousand years as one day.
- God lives in the eternal present, but when that final day comes, it will come as a "thief in the night" without warning.

4. The Defense of God's Purpose – 2 Peter 3:9ff –

- As we see the rise of evil in the world, we wonder how much more the Lord can take before He unleashes His wrath.
- However, the Lord's longsuffering is because of His patience.
- God is enduring the rebellion of the damned to complete His redemption of those He has called to be saved.
- Just as Noah preached 120 years while he built the Ark, so we preach the gospel of Jesus Christ, waiting for that last elect to be saved, for Christ's Church to be built.
- In 1 Thessalonians 5:2ff, the Apostle Paul said the Day of the Lord would not come until two things occurred:
 - **The rebellion – the "falling away"** – the departure from the truth and the embracing of the lie – the Apostasy.
 - **The revealing – the "appearing"** – the arrival of the Antichrist to be the leader of the New World Order.

5. The Declaration of God's Desire – 2 Peter 3:11ff –

- Since we know this earth and this life will soon be destroyed, how should we then live?
 - **"Live in holy conduct and godliness,"** – revealing what it means to be an authentic Christian.
 - **"Looking for the coming of the day of the Lord,"** – not so concerned about the creature comforts of this life, but making sure we are dressed and ready for our new life.
 - **"Looking for that new heavens and new earth,"** – not trying to save the world, but saving those we love from the coming destruction.