



What are you looking for?

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Paul says in his epistle to Titus - it is the grace of God that brings salvation to you and it is available to everybody. He goes on to say that the same grace that brought salvation teaches you to live a godly, righteous and holy life in this present world.

The world pokes fun at those who live a godly, righteous and holy life. Even in the religious community it is deemed not important and legalistic to live the way we do. Why do we live a godly, righteous and holy life?

- We live like that because we are looking for the coming of our Lord and savior Jesus Christ.
- We live like we do because he is coming for a church that is ready and waiting for his return.
- We live like we do because he is coming for a church that is without any spot or blemish, a people that have had their robes washed in the blood of the lamb.
- We live like we do because we want to be ready for his return.

We live like we do because:

*There is coming a day
When no heartaches shall come,
No more clouds in the sky,
No more tears to dim the eye,
All is peace forever more,
On that happy golden shore,
What a day glorious day that will be.
We live like we do because:
There'll be no sorrow there,
No more burdens to bear,
No more sickness, no pain,
No more parting over there,
And forever I will be,
With the one who died for me,
What a day glorious day that will be.
What a day that will be,
When my Jesus I shall see,
And I look upon his face,
The one who saved me by his grace,
When he takes me by the hand,
And leads me through the promise land
What a day glorious day that will be.*

- I am looking for his coming. I am looking for that blessed hope and glorious appearing. Oh, what a day that is going be.
- My question to you is “what are YOU looking for?”
- Jesus is coming soon. But by and large this world is not looking for the coming of the Lord. More and more in this day people are turning to new age thinking and new age philosophies. Just the other day a friend of mine told me of a bumper sticker that he saw, right here in CT. It said “Born again pagen”. To this world there is no God, but they consider themselves gods. They walk according to their own lust and what pleases them and what

- brings them pleasure. The only God is what makes me feel good.
- But it doesn't matter that the world is not looking for his coming. He is still coming some day very soon.

The Bible says in *1 Thessalonians 4:16-18*

*16 For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first:
17 Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord.
18 Wherefore comfort one another with these words.*

- Eight times in the New Testament it refers to the coming of the Lord as a thief in the night. In other words we do not know the day or the hour that he is going to return, but we know that he will return. So we must live soberly, righteously and godly in this present life. We must live with the rapture in mind. We must live like we are looking for his coming any day.

What are you looking for?

2 Peter 3:1-10

*3:1 This second epistle, beloved, I now write unto you; in both which I stir up your pure minds by way of remembrance: 2 That ye may be mindful of the words which were spoken before by the holy prophets, and of the commandment of us the apostles of the Lord and Saviour:
3 Knowing this first, that there shall come in the last days scoffers, walking after their own lusts,
4 And saying, Where is the promise of his coming? for since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation.
5 For this they willingly are ignorant of, that by the word of God the heavens were of old, and the earth standing out of the water and in the water:
6 Whereby the world that then was, being overflowed with water, perished:
7 But the heavens and the earth, which are now, by the same word are kept in store, reserved unto fire against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men.
8 But, beloved, be not ignorant of this one thing, that one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day.
9 The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.
10 But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up.*

What are you looking for?

- Now, what I want everybody to understand in this message is: How you view the past and how you look forward to the future has a great deal to do with the way you live in the present. Right now all of us who are breathing are suspended between the tension of the past and the future, which is called the present. How I:
 - Act
 - Speak
 - Live
 - Dress
 - Think
 - Treat other people
 - Whether I serve the Lord or the devil

- These things are largely determined by the tension of my past and the pressure of my future.
- My past and my future determine the kind of a man I am today. I'm no Dr. Laura and I don't have a degree in psychology, but I can tell you a little bit about a persons past and a lot about a persons future just by observing how they live right now.
- We are all in the right now. We all live in the present – the here and now. The present is a powerful thing. The

devil is scared of the present. There is nothing he can do about his future. It has already been sealed. But he can still do some things in the present. That is why the devil is always wanting you to look at the past or look at the future – to get your eyes off of the right now.

If the church ever starts:

- Praying right now
- Giving right now
- Fasting right now
- Teaching HBS right now
- Winning souls right now
- Praising God right now
- There is no telling what kind of a revival we could have right now.

If a saint of God would ever start:

- Dedicating their life to God right now
- Living for him right now
- Reading the Bible right now
- Praying right now
- Fasting right now
- Making themselves available to God right now
- There is no telling what God could do through that individual.

- But the devil wants you to say I'll start next year. I'll start tomorrow. I'll start next week. He is afraid of the right now. He is afraid of the person who is saying I need to get right with God tonight.
- We need to commit the present to God. We need to commit our right now's to God.
 - Whatever you want me to do
 - Say
 - Wherever you want me to go
 - That's what I want to do!!
- The way I understand my past, 31 years are gone, and I can do nothing to ever retrieve those years again. The decisions that I made I hope they were the right ones because I can't go back and do it over again.
- The way I view my past establishes how I live today and my understanding of the future determines whether I live in hope or whether I live in despair.
- My actions tonight are determined by my past and future. So I would think that we as believers need to get a concept of what God has done with our past and what God is doing in our future if that's what effects our present.
- First of all let's look at our past.

1 Corinthians 6:9-11

*9 Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind,
10 Nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God.
11 And such were some of you: but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God.*

Ephesians 2:1-3

*2:1 And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins:
2 Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience:
3 Among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others.*

Ephesians 2:4-10

*4 But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us,
5 Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved;)
6 And hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus:
7 That in the ages to come he might show the exceeding riches of his grace in his kindness toward us through Christ Jesus.
8 For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God:*

9 Not of works, lest any man should boast.

10 For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.

- I'm glad I have been born again. According to Acts 2:38 I repented of my sins, was baptized in Jesus name and received the gift of the Holy Ghost.
- I didn't just shake the hand of a preacher, nor did I sign my name on a membership roll to get eternal life. I didn't just believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, but it was the new birth experience I had with Jesus. I was born again of the water and of the spirit, and it has been a relationship with Jesus Christ ever since.
- Every day with Jesus is sweeter than the day before.

You say I was a:

- Drunk
- Adulterer
- Thief
- Deceiver
- Liar
- Cheater
- Drug addict
- How can God do anything with me?

- I want to preach to you tonight that it doesn't matter what you have done in the past. If you have been born again your past has been eradicated. Your past has been all washed away. As long as it's under the blood you have been forgiven.

1 John 1:9

9 If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

1 John 2:1-2

2:1 My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous:

2 And he is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world.

2 Corinthians 5:17

17 Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.

- You don't have a past anymore it's all under the blood. That should cause somebody to praise him tonight because you know better than anyone the horrible mess you were before you came to God.
- Get your eyes off of your past and get them on your present and on your future because if you've been born again your present and future is bright.
- If you've got sin in your life today you can have it removed before you leave this sanctuary.
- As I said before, we are all living in between the past and future, which is the present. We are all here in the present, living right now.

• **In the present there is:**

- Pain
- Sickness
- Suffering

• **In the present there:**

- Are disappointments
- Are troublesome times
- Are perplexing situations
- Are things we must go through to get to the other side.
- In the present there is the Red Sea dilemma. In the present there is the fiery furnace we must contend with. In the present there is the den of lions we have got to deal with.
- There are those here tonight that this past year has been perhaps the most trying year of your life.

- You have been through trials unbelievable.
- You have suffered sickness
- You have dealt with losing a loved one
- You have had to go through financial difficulties
- You've had problems that knocked the breath out of you. They seemed to come one right after another. Just about the time that you were regaining your balance another problem would knock you down.
- You've encountered problems in your marriage
- You've had problems in your family
- The clouds gathered over your head. The storms began to rage. The winds began to blow.
- The rain started to fall and it seemed like you were all alone. No one understood your plight.
- The trial seems to be one unending day. The only thing that kept you was the reality that you had built your life upon the rock of the word of God.
- What I want you to know is that this life (the present) is just for a little while. It will soon be over. Compared to the billions and billions of years of eternity this life is just a puff of smoke. This life is just the entrance to the life to come. There is a life beyond this life. We are not laying up treasure here in this life but we are laying up treasure for the life to come.
- **You see one day it will all be over and then it will be:**
 - No more pain
 - No more sorrow
 - No more sickness
 - No more tears
 - No more problems
 - No more disappointments
 - Oh what a day that is going to be. I'm looking forward to that day. I'm looking for the blessed hope and glorious appearing of the great God and our savior Jesus Christ.
 - If you know what your future is the present really doesn't mean that much. We are not living for this little two bit world down here but we have got an inheritance awaiting us up in Heaven.
 - That's why you can see someone from this church going through unbelievable problems and still keep praising God and be on fire for God because their treasure is not in this life.

2 Peter 3:11-14

11 Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness,

12 Looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God, wherein the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat?

13 Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness.

14 Wherefore, beloved, seeing that ye look for such things, be diligent that ye may be found of him in peace, without spot, and blameless.

- When your going through something remind yourself that the best is yet to come!!

When you've got:

- Sickness – the best is yet to come
- Pain
- Sorrow
- Problems
- Trials
- Difficulties
- Disappointments

- Bro. Williams – you’ve been laid off from your job. God is going to provide a better job for you. But even if he doesn’t the best is yet to come.
- Bro. Robertson – you’ve faced staggering problems this year. I believe God is going to see you through. But even if the problems don’t end the best is yet to come.
- Dad – you’ve been battling heart problems. God is still a healer. But if he never heals you the best is yet to come.
- Sis. Filkins – you’ve been battling health problems for a long time. God is still a healer he has healed you before. But if he doesn’t heal you ever again the best is yet to come.
- Bro. Mills – I know you would like to see your daughter live with you in your house. But if it never happens the best is yet to come.
- Grandma Short – your facing a move into an elderly apartment building. Your not sure how its all going to work out. But I want you to know the best is yet to come.
- Bro. & Sis. Pace – you’ve started a brand new church. You rejoice when you win someone to the Lord. But in between those times there are seasons that are hard. There are discouraging times. I believe its going to get better – revival is on the way. But if it never gets better the best is yet to come.
- Bro. & Sis. Filkins – I know its not easy to leave your family behind and know you might never see them again. If you leave in a couple of weeks and we never get to see you again in this life the best is yet to come for we will meet in that city whose builder and maker is God
- Bro. & Sis. Smith – you pastor a great church in Sumpter S.C. But in pastoring sometimes there are problems and it gets lonely. If you never fix all the problems and the difficult times never end. I want you to know the best is yet to come.

The best is yet to come! Say it with me – The best is yet to come!!!!

- What kept the early church going in the midst of persecution was they were looking for his coming. They got up every morning and said he just might come today.
- The apostles all died as martyrs except John but that didn’t stop any of them from proclaiming the truth. Why? Because they thought he could come today.
 - Peter – why are you preaching you know they are going to throw you in jail – he just may come today.
 - Paul & Silas – they are going to beat you and put you in prison – he may come today.
- Why are you going to Lystra Paul your going to be stoned – he may come today
- Just recant the name of Jesus and we won’t feed you to the lions – no I can’t do it because he may come today.
- We are going to persecute you and throw your children to the lions if you don’t denounce the name of Jesus. I can’t do it because this life is just temporary, it only last for a season. He may come today.

Titus 2:11-14

*11 For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men,
 12 Teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world;
 13 Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ;
 14 Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works.*

- What are you looking for tonight?
- Is your past under the blood?
- Is your future secure?
- Are you living your life with the rapture in mind? He just might come today.
- Every head bowed and every eye closed
- Think with me if you will of that city that we are headed to. That city that lieth foursquare.
 - 15 hundred miles high
 - 15 hundred miles wide
 - 15 hundred miles long

- walls of jasper
- 12 gates to that city – each one made from a pearl
- streets of gold
- mansions
- crystal river that flows from the throne of God for the healing of the nations
- city of pure gold
- garnished with all manner of precious stones
 - But most of all Jesus will be there!!!
- Are you ready right now to go to that city? If the trumpet would sound tonight would you be ready?