

**Sermon Title: Training for Godliness with the End in View**

**Sermon Text: 2 Peter 3:10-13**

**Sermon Purpose: To call the hearer to intentional Godliness and Holiness with the end in view.**

**Sermon Proposition: There are 3 basic motivations for Godliness and Holiness in the last days.**

**Introduction:** Peter cautions believers to beware of false teachers with their false doctrine and loose lifestyles. The temptation to a sinful lifestyle so concerned Peter that shortly after his first letter, he followed up with this one. 2 Peter and Jude both focus on these warnings, the difference is the tenses of the verbs. 2 Peter says they are coming, Jude says they are here .

**2 Peter 2:1-3** But there were also false prophets among the people, even as there will be false teachers among you, who will secretly bring in destructive heresies, even denying the Lord who bought them, *and* bring on themselves swift destruction. **2** And many will follow their destructive ways, because of whom the way of truth will be blasphemed. **3** By covetousness they will exploit you with deceptive words; for a long time their judgment has not been idle, and their destruction does not slumber.

**2 Peter 2:10-22** and especially those who walk according to the flesh in the lust of uncleanness and despise authority. *They are* presumptuous, self-willed. They are not afraid to speak evil of dignitaries, **11** whereas angels, who are greater in power and might, do not bring a reviling accusation against them before the Lord. **12** But these, like natural brute beasts made to be caught and destroyed, speak evil of the things they do not understand, and will utterly perish in their own corruption, **13** *and* will receive the wages of unrighteousness, *as* those who count it pleasure to carouse in the daytime. *They are* spots and blemishes, carousing in their own deceptions while they feast with you, **14** having eyes full of adultery and that cannot cease from sin, enticing unstable souls. They have a heart trained in covetous practices, *and are* accursed children. **15** They have forsaken the right way and gone astray, following the way of Balaam the *son* of Beor, who loved the wages of unrighteousness; **16** but he was rebuked for his iniquity: a dumb donkey speaking with a man's voice restrained the madness of the prophet. **17** These are wells without water, clouds carried by a tempest, for whom is reserved the blackness of darkness forever. **18** For when they speak great swelling *words* of emptiness, they allure through the lusts of the flesh, through lewdness, the ones who have actually escaped from those who live in error. **19** While they promise them liberty, they themselves are slaves of corruption; for by whom a person is overcome, by him also he is brought into bondage. **20** For if, after they have escaped the pollutions of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, they are again entangled in them and overcome, the latter end is worse for them than the beginning. **21** For it would have been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than having known *it*, to turn from the holy commandment delivered to them. **22** But it has happened to them according to the true proverb: "A dog returns to his own vomit," and, "a sow, having washed, to her wallowing in the mire."

Peter also warned against denials of Christ's return with its accompanying judgment. He urged his readers to make every effort to grow in the knowledge and godliness of the Christian faith. 2 Peter insists on the importance of Scripture for guiding and preserving our faith.

**2 Peter 3:1-7** Beloved, I now write to you this second epistle (in *both of* which I stir up your pure minds by way of reminder), **2** that you 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 Savior, **3** knowing this first: that scoffers will come in the last days, walking according to 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 creation." **5** For this they willfully forget: that by the word of God the heavens were of old, and the earth standing out of water and in the water, **6** by which the world *that* then existed perished, being flooded with water. **7** But the heavens and the earth *which* are now preserved by the same word, are reserved for fire until the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men.

Old Testament prophets often predicted that "in that day" the Lord will act in a mighty way to judge evil and redeem His people.

**Amos 5:18-20** Woe to you who desire the day of the LORD! For what good *is* the day of the LORD to you? It *will be* darkness, and not light. **19** It *will be* as though a man fled from a lion, And a bear met him! Or *as though* he went into the house, Leaned his hand on the wall, And a serpent bit him! **20** *Is* not the day of the LORD darkness, and not light? *Is it not* very dark, with no brightness in it?

**Joel 1:15** Alas for the day! For the day of the LORD *is* at hand; It shall come as destruction from the Almighty.

**Zephaniah 1:7** Be silent in the presence of the Lord GOD; For the day of the LORD *is* at hand, For the LORD has prepared a sacrifice; He has invited His guests.

**Zephaniah 1:14** The great day of the LORD *is* near; *It is* near and hastens quickly. The noise of the day of the LORD is bitter; There the mighty men shall cry out.

**Amos 8:8-11** Shall the land not tremble for this, And everyone mourn who dwells in it? All of it shall swell like the River, Heave and subside Like the River of Egypt. **9** "And it shall come to pass in that day," says the Lord GOD, "That I will make the sun go down at noon, And I will darken the earth in broad daylight; **10** I will turn your feasts into mourning, And all your songs into lamentation; I will bring sackcloth on every waist, And baldness on every head; I will make it like mourning for an only *son*, And its end like a bitter day. **11** "Behold, the days are coming," says the Lord GOD, "That I will send a famine on the land, Not a famine of bread, Nor a thirst for water, But of hearing the words of the LORD.

**Amos 9:5** The Lord GOD of hosts, He who touches the earth and it melts, And all who dwell there mourn; All of it shall swell like the River, And subside like the River of Egypt.

**Luke 17:24** "For as the lightning that flashes out of one *part* under heaven shines to the other *part* under heaven, so also the Son of Man will be in His day.

**Amos 9:9-12** "For surely I will command, And will sift the house of Israel among all nations, As *grain* is sifted in a sieve; Yet not the smallest grain shall fall to the ground. **10** All the sinners of My people shall die by the sword, Who say, 'The calamity shall not overtake nor confront us.' **11** "On that day I will raise up The tabernacle of David, which has fallen down, And repair its damages; I will raise up its ruins, And rebuild it as in the days of old; **12** That they may possess the remnant of Edom, And all the Gentiles who are called by My name," Says the LORD who does this thing.

**I. Training for Godliness requires awareness. V.10**

**II. Training for Godliness requires alterations. V.11**

**III. Training for Godliness requires anticipation. V.12-13**

**I. Training for Godliness requires awareness. V.10**

A. "The day of the Lord" is a technical term pointing to the special intervention of God in human history for judgment. This ultimately refers to the future time of judgment where God judges the wicked on earth, and ends the world system in its present form.

"This day of the Lord" will have a surprise arrival, sudden, unexpected and destructive effect for the unprepared.

**1 Thessalonians 5:2** For you yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so comes as a thief in the night.

B. The "heavens" Greek plural form, refers to the physical universe, passing away with a "great noise." The idea is that of a whistling or crackling sound, similar to the sound of wood burning and crackling in a fire place. God will incinerate the universe possibly in some atomic reaction change of events, that will disintegrate all matter as we know it. (**vv. 7, 11, 12, 13**)

C. "The Elements" are the atomic components into which matter or materials are ultimately divisible, which make up the composition of all created matter. This is a reference to atoms, neutrons, protons, and electrons are all going to be disintegrated. (**v.11**) The whole earth, the physical, the natural in its present form will be consumed.

**Isaiah 24:19-20** The earth is violently broken, The earth is split open, The earth is shaken exceedingly. **20** The earth shall reel to and fro like a drunkard, And shall totter like a hut; Its transgression shall be heavy upon it, And it will fall, and not rise again.

**Isaiah 34:4** All the host of heaven shall be dissolved, And the heavens shall be rolled up like a scroll; All their host shall fall down As the leaf falls from the vine, And as *fruit* falling from a fig tree.

## II. Training for Godliness requires alterations. V.11

### A. The believers alteration in light of this truth. V.11a

This is an exclamation rather than a question. It means “How astoundingly excellent you ought to be!” This is a direct challenge for every Christian to conform their lives to God’s standard of godliness and holiness, in awareness of this reality of coming judgment and eternity.

**1 Corinthians 4:15** For though you might have ten thousand instructors in Christ, yet *you do not have* many fathers; for in Christ Jesus I have begotten you through the gospel.

**2 Corinthians 5:9** Therefore we make it our aim, whether present or absent, to be well pleasing to Him.

1. Holy conduct – refers to the way a Christian should live life – separated from sin.
2. Godliness – refers to the spirit of reverence which should permeate a Christian’s attitude that rules the heart.  
**2 Peter 3:14-18** Therefore, beloved, looking forward to these things, be diligent to be found by Him in peace, without spot and blameless; **15** and consider *that* the longsuffering of our Lord *is* salvation-- as also our beloved brother Paul, according to the wisdom given to him, has written to you, **16** as also in all his epistles, speaking in them of these things, in which are some things hard to understand, which untaught and unstable *people* twist to their own destruction, as *they do* also the rest of the Scriptures. **17** You therefore, beloved, since you know *this* beforehand, beware lest you also fall from your own steadfastness, being led away with the error of the wicked; **18** but grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To Him *be* the glory both now and forever. Amen.

## III. Training for Godliness requires anticipation. V.12-13

One motive for holy conduct and godliness is anticipation of the coming “Day of God.” “Hastening” means eagerly desiring that something will happen. Christians are not to fear the future “day of God,” but are to eagerly hope for it.

**1 Corinthians 1:7** so that you come short in no gift, eagerly waiting for the revelation of our Lord Jesus Christ,

**1 Corinthians 16:22** If anyone does not love the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be accursed. O Lord, come!

**1 John 2:28** And now, little children, abide in Him, that when He appears, we may have confidence and not be ashamed before Him at His coming.

**1 John 3:3** And everyone who has this hope in Him purifies himself, just as He is pure.

The “day of God” is not the same as the “Day of the Lord.” The “day of God” refers to the eternal state, in preparation in which the heavens and earth are burned up and the new creation is made (**1 Corinthians 15:28**) man’s day will come to an end, the conception of the universe by man, Satan, and sin will be over and judged.

The new world in which righteousness dwells (**v.13**), requires the Lord to first destroy the old, sin-cursed universe. In the future, God will destroy the heavens and the earth by fire.

**Isaiah 66:15** For behold, the LORD will come with fire And with His chariots, like a whirlwind, To render His anger with fury, And His rebuke with flames of fire.

**Daniel 7:9-10** "I watched till thrones were put in place, And the Ancient of Days was seated; His garment *was* white as snow, And the hair of His head *was* like pure wool. His throne *was* a fiery flame, Its wheels a burning fire; **10** A fiery stream issued And came forth from before Him. A thousand thousands ministered to Him; Ten thousand times ten thousand stood before Him. The court was seated, And the books were opened.

**Micah 1:4** The mountains will melt under Him, And the valleys will split Like wax before the fire, Like waters poured down a steep place.

**Malachi 4:1** "For behold, the day is coming, Burning like an oven, And all the proud, yes, all who do wickedly will be stubble. And the day which is coming shall burn them up," Says the LORD of hosts, "That will leave them neither root nor branch.

**Matthew 3:11-12** "I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance, but He who is coming after me is mightier than I, whose sandals I am not worthy to carry. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. **12** "His winnowing fan *is* in His hand, and He will thoroughly clean out His threshing floor, and gather His wheat into the barn; but He will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire."

**2 Thessalonians 1:7-8** and to *give* you who are troubled rest with us when the Lord Jesus is revealed from heaven with His mighty angels, **8** in flaming fire taking vengeance on those who do not know God, and on those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ.

In the present universe, the heavens are full of stars, comets, and asteroids. The core of the earth is also filled with a flaming, boiling, liquid lake of fire, the temperature of which is some 24,500 degrees Fahrenheit. The human race is separated from this fiery core of earth by only 10 miles of crust. The whole earth is a paternal fire bomb, God can disintegrate the whole universe in an explosion of atomic energy.

Therefore, the promise of a new universe is rooted in Old Testament prophecy.

**Psalms 102:25** Of old You laid the foundation of the earth, And the heavens *are* the work of Your hands.

**Isaiah 65:17** "For behold, I create new heavens and a new earth; And the former shall not be remembered or come to mind.

**Isaiah 66:22** "For as the new heavens and the new earth Which I will make shall remain before Me," says the LORD, "So shall your descendants and your name remain.

The word "new" means new in quality, i.e. different from before, not just new in the sense of time. The universe is new in quality, because righteousness has settled in and taken up permanent and exclusive residence.

**Isaiah 60:19-22** "The sun shall no longer be your light by day, Nor for brightness shall the moon give light to you; But the LORD will be to you an everlasting light, And your God your glory. **20** Your sun shall no longer go down, Nor shall your moon withdraw itself; For the LORD will be your everlasting light, And the days of your mourning shall be ended. **21** Also your people *shall* all *be* righteous; They shall inherit the land forever, The branch of My planting, The work of My hands, That I may be glorified. **22** A little one shall become a thousand, And a small one a strong nation. I, the LORD, will hasten it in its time."

**Revelation 21:1-7** Now I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away. Also there was no more sea. **2** Then I, John, saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. **3** And I heard a loud voice from heaven saying, "Behold, the tabernacle of God *is* with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people. God Himself will be with them *and be* their God. **4** "And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes; there shall be no more death, nor sorrow, nor crying. There shall be no more pain, for the former things have passed away." **5** Then He who sat on the throne said, "Behold, I make all things new." And He said to me, "Write, for these words are true and faithful." **6** And He said to me, "It is done! I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End. I will give of the fountain of the water of life freely to him who thirsts. **7** "He who overcomes shall inherit all things, and I will be his God and he shall be My son.

**Conclusion:** "The book of Jude and 2 Peter use some of the Bible's fiercest language to depict the fate of the wicked teachers (false teachers) who misled the faithful by mocking their hope of a second coming and encouraging licentious living because they did not fear a final judgment. (**2 Peter 3:3-7; Jude 3-4**)

These letters see the final judgment as the ultimate act in a historical pattern (**2 Peter 2:4-10; Jude 5-7**), an act that should prompt righteous living by its cosmic power to destroy even the very heavens (**2 Peter 3:11-13**).

What are the theological implications of the biblical teaching are that final judgment is

1. The ultimate triumph of God's will and the consummate display of his glory in history – the sign that all He intended has been accomplished.
2. The cosmic declaration that God is just – all affronts to His glory are punished and all recognition of it is rewarded.
3. The climax of Christ's ministry, as the Apostle's Creed affirms;
4. The reminder that human and cosmic history move toward a goal, measured by the purposes of God;
5. The absolute seal of human accountability – all believers are held responsible for their works, all unbelievers for their rebellion.
6. The most serious motives for Christian mission – in the face of such judgment the world's only hope is Christ's salvation. (**Acts 4:12**)