



KING'S CHAPEL

Daily Devotional - 1 Peter Study

Week 6 - Day 3

Approaching God

Read John 15:13-15 - *“Greater love has no one than this: to lay down one’s life for one’s friends. You are my friends if you do what I command. I no longer call you servants, because a servant does not know his master’s business. Instead, I have called you friends...”*

Prayer: *“You are my friends”* implies a stunning level of comfortable personal interaction with one who is also the eternal, omnipotent Creator of the universe. In the OT, only Abraham and by implication Moses are called “friends of God.” Here Jesus extends this privilege to all obedient believers. Ask God to help you experience deep friendship with God today as you abide in Him.

Bible Reading, Study & Meditation - 1 Peter 4:6; 1 Thess. 4:13-16; 2 Peter 3:1-7

Passage Introduction: *Believers in Peter’s time expected Christ to return very soon. When some began dying and the Lord had not yet returned, some believers faced a crisis of faith. Unbelievers mocked them for their belief in the resurrection, pointing to the deaths of their fellow believers that it was a vain hope. Today we’ll see how Peter and Paul address this issue:*

1 Peter 4:6 - For this is why the gospel was preached even to those who are dead, that though judged in the flesh the way people are, they might live in the spirit the way God does.

1 Thessalonians 4:13-16 - **13** But we do not want you to be uninformed, brothers, about those who are asleep, that you may not grieve as others do who have no hope. **14** For since we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so, through Jesus, God will bring with him those who have fallen asleep. **15** For this we declare to you by a word from the Lord, that we who are alive, who are left until the coming of the Lord, will not precede those who have fallen asleep. **16** For the Lord himself will descend from heaven with a cry of command, with the voice of an archangel, and with the sound of the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first.

2 Peter 3:1-7 - **1** This is now the second letter that I am writing to you, beloved. In both of them I am stirring up your sincere mind by way of reminder, **2** that you should remember the predictions of the holy prophets and the commandment of the Lord and Savior through your apostles, **3** knowing this first of all, that scoffers will come in the last days with scoffing, following their own sinful desires. **4** They will say, “Where is the promise of his coming? For ever since the fathers fell asleep, all things are continuing as they were from the beginning of creation.” **5** For they deliberately overlook this fact, that the heavens existed long ago, and the earth was formed out of water and through water by the word of God, **6** and that by means of these the world that then existed was deluged with water and perished. **7** But by the same word the heavens and earth that now exist are stored up for fire, being kept until the day of judgment and destruction of the ungodly.

Daily Study Questions

You may find it helpful to read through the commentary in “Resources for Further Study” at the end of today’s study to answer these questions.

Questions for Study

- In the 1 Thessalonians passage, how did Paul speak to the dismay these believers were experiencing with regard to the death of their fellow believers and the return of Christ?
- Now read 2 Peter 3:1-7. In his second letter to the churches in Asia Minor, how did Peter address the same issue (from 1 Peter 4:6) more fully?
- In what ways are all living people, saved and unsaved, “judged in the flesh” (vs. 4:6)? Look up Romans 5:12 to confirm your answer. How does this help interpret Peter’s words in 4:6?

Questions for Meditation & Application

- How are Peter’s words intended as an encouragement to believers to endure mocking from unbelievers? How do they encourage you?
- Have you ever been mocked or ridiculed for your beliefs? How did you respond?

Close in Prayer:

If you are sure that the day of the Lord is coming, then pray about what you should be doing in the meantime. Get specific with God. Ask him to show you what he desires of you. Ask him to confirm where you are occupied with the right things.

Resources for Further Study

1 Peter chapter 4 notes

Commentary & Notes on 1 Peter 4:4-6

Peter has been reminding us that we were once estranged from God because we had chosen the will of man, but now we are God's people because he has chosen to save us. And so now we desire the will of God with its righteousness. Of course, that makes us different, and strange. So others are "surprised when you do not join them in the same flood of debauchery, and they malign you" (4:4). This is one of the hardest things a new Christian has to face. Your friends liked you because, to use Peter's blunt language, you shared in "the same flood of debauchery." It seemed great fun at times, but then you came to embrace Christ, and therefore to embrace the will of God and to leave behind your former passions. But your friends have not. They still pursue the will of man, and they still delight in the sensualities and passions of this world. They will be surprised when they see you again and assume all is the same. When they invite you to join them in the former passions, they will be surprised when you say No.

Some may be curious; others will mock you and your God. After all, your choice to follow Christ is an indictment of them. Some will try to "win you back" because they want their "old friend" back. Others will be utterly hostile because your choice to follow Christ alters their entire lives. Think about how your coming to Christ affects an unbelieving spouse or a business partnership with an unbeliever. Perhaps you've been involved in illegal activity, and it has been lucrative. But now, you must leave that all behind. Imagine the pressure you will face. How will you respond? What will you say? What will you do? Peter says, Cling to hope! Peter reminds us that our mockers "will give account to him who is ready to judge the living and the dead" (v 5). Though it may last your whole life, their mocking is only temporary, because judgment is coming. Once again, Peter encourages suffering Christians to persevere through unjust suffering with a view to the salvation that will be revealed when Christ returns to judge "the living and the dead." So, let them mock for now because, as King David said, God will prepare a table before you in the presence of your enemies (Psalm 23:5).

Peter explains this living hope once more when he says in 1 Peter 4:6 that "the gospel was preached even to those who are dead, that though judged in the flesh the way people are, they might live in the spirit the way God does." In other words, the gospel we embrace in life is not empty because we will be raised after death. From the perspective of a skeptic, Christianity seems empty. What advantage is there to believing in Christ if Christians suffer more in this life, and still end this life by dying, just like everyone else? But, Peter argues, though Christians die—they are "judged in the flesh the way people are"—they will "live in the spirit the way God does." As we saw when we were thinking about (and wrestling with!) 3:18, "live in the spirit" means the resurrection to the realm of the Spirit in a spiritual, incorruptible body. Peter is simply saying that the gospel preached to us and believed by us gives us hope beyond the now. It is not empty because it brings fullness of life eternally, beyond the grave.

We need continually to preach this good news to ourselves! We need to rehearse it every day! These two things need to dominate our thinking, as they did our Lord's. It is only as we think right that we will live well—only as we think rightly that we live in a way that is a recognizably New-Testament-shaped Christian life, which takes account of and is directed by the truth that "through many tribulations we must enter the kingdom of God."

Sanchez, Juan. 1 Peter For You