

# The End is at Hand

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Preacher: Colin Horne

[ 0 : 00 ] Before the preaching of God's word, please take your Bibles again. We read in God's word, the words of the Lord are pure words or flawless, like silver refined in a furnace of earth, purified seven times.

So we take that flawless word of God and turn to 1 Peter. A little back from where we read earlier, 1 Peter chapter 4. And I will read from verses 7 through 11.

1 Peter chapter 4, verse 7. This is the word of God. The end of all things is at hand. Therefore be self-controlled and sober-minded for the sake of your prayers.

Above all, keep loving one another earnestly, since love covers a multitude of sins. Show hospitality to one another without grumbling. As each has received a gift, use it to serve one another as good stewards of God's varied grace.

Whoever speaks, as one who speaks oracles of God. Whoever serves, as one who serves by the strength that God supplies. In order that in everything God may be glorified through Jesus Christ.

[ 1 : 21 ] To him belong glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen. Let's hear the word of God preached. When my kids know that people are coming over to visit, they love to watch and wait.

I'm sure that my kids aren't the only ones who do that. I've even been to some of your houses and found you kids watching and waiting for us. As that visit approaches, as it draws near, word trickles down from our oldest to the youngest.

They're coming! Hurry! Let's get to the door! We have to wait! And so all four of them have that one thing in mind. It is time to form the welcome party.

So our older ones go to the windows. Our youngest goes to our glass storm door. And sometimes that storm door isn't fully closed.

So he plasters his face on the door and then finds his way outside as it opens for him. They are ready. They are watching. They are excited. Some of you may have experienced this coming to our house.

[ 2 : 29 ] And that wasn't just before you arrived like 30 seconds ago. That was like 15, 20 minutes of watching and waiting. Well, God's word teaches us a fundamental truth as well.

We are awaiting the return of Christ. He is going to visit this earth again. With each passing day, the time draws nearer.

Here in 1 Peter 4, verse 7 says, The end of all things is at hand. Now these words were written nearly 2,000 years ago.

And so it might seem like, on a kind of cursory glance, was Peter mistaken? 2,000 years seems like a long time for us to say that something is near.

So there's a couple things that we need to clear up about that. First, we need to remember that God doesn't operate in time the way that we do. What he calls near may not feel so near to us.

[ 3 : 38 ] Finite creatures that we are bound by time. Nearly 2,000 years ago and counting is a long time. And yet the scriptures say in 2 Peter, the next letter that Peter wrote, it says that with the Lord, one day is as a thousand years.

And a thousand years as one day. So God is not bound by time. He is the Lord of time. He's not limited by it as we are.

And so what we would consider slowness, perhaps, simply isn't slowness to him. 2,000 years is near. That's the first thing that we need to remember.

Here's the second. When Peter says that the end of all things is at hand, he's thinking more in terms of events and less in terms of time itself.

Peter isn't counting down the seconds until the ball drops on New Year's Eve. He's counting down the events that God has laid out for us in his word.

[ 4 : 40 ] So from the moment that Adam and Eve ate the fruit in the garden, they fell into sin, God has this unfolding plan of redemption that he has revealed to us in Scripture.

So you look at the Old Testament, and the Old Testament was anticipating the coming of the Messiah. They were looking for the salvation that was to come.

So there were events that had to take place. The Savior must appear. And the Savior must die. He must be buried. Rise again. Ascend to the Father.

Galatians 4, speaking of his first coming, says, But when the fullness of time had come, God sent forth his Son. Meaning just at the right time.

Just when God determined from eternity past, he sent his Son. And he lived that perfect life. He died that obedient death. He rose and ascended.

[ 5 : 40 ] And he sent his Spirit so that his people might spread the good news of his death and resurrection to the ends of the earth. So what comes next? The end.

The end comes next in God's redemptive plan. And the end is the return of Christ. That triumphant day. When his enemies will be fully and finally defeated.

When the new heavens and the new earth will be established. The final restoration of all things.

There are no more events that need to happen that God has revealed to us in his word.

We can check it off. Christ has come. He has died. He has risen. He's ascended. We have one box left unchecked. He must come again.

So the question for us this morning. How then should we wait? Should we be like kids? Waiting for people to visit.

[ 6 : 40 ] Standing at the window, peering out. Well the answer here in 1 Peter is no. That is not how we're to wait. Though we are to be watchful, we're not to be idle.

We should be eager for Christ to return. And yet, God has given us good responsibilities to carry out. Jesus once told a parable in Luke 19.

And in that parable, a nobleman was preparing to go off to a far country to receive a kingdom. And before he left, he gathered ten of his servants to him.

And he gave them some money. And these are the instructions that he left with them. Engage in business until I come.

The nobleman was coming again. He was going off to this far country. But he was going to return. And he told his servants, Engage in business until I come.

[ 7 : 43 ] And we see here in this parable, the nobleman is Jesus. He is gone. He is going to return. We are like those servants. And so what are Jesus' instructions to us?

Sit around and wait for him to come back? Watch at the window? Plaster your face on that glass door? No. Engage in business until I come.

So there is good work to be done. There are ways that we are to live even as we wait. Here in 1 Peter, God gives us four clear, practical ways for us to do that.

To live productive Christian lives as we wait for the return of our Lord. Well, let's look at the first way together. We keep thinking clearly.

We keep thinking clearly. Read with me again just verse 7. The end of all things is at hand.

Therefore, be self-controlled and sober-minded for the sake of your prayers.

[ 8 : 55 ] So we see here that Peter makes a tight connection for us between the future and the present. What is to come ought to inform the way that we live now.

The end of all things is near. Therefore, be self-controlled. Be sober-minded. Christ is coming again. Therefore, live in this way.

Now what does it mean to be self-controlled? What does it mean to be sober-minded? Well, how about we start with what it's not? It's not, Peter says, how the Gentiles live.

By Gentiles, we mean unbelievers. We actually read something of how the Gentiles live in 2 Peter, in our scripture reading. The lust of defiling passions.

Those who indulge in that. We also read of the way the Gentiles live in 1 Peter chapter 4, just before our passage. Back in verse 3, Peter gave a list of sins.

[ 10 : 04 ] And what do all of these sins have in common? A complete lack of restraint. Living in, consumed by the passions of the flesh.

Drunkness, sensuality, drinking parties. Those who live with no mind to the future and are only thinking about the here and now.

I must soak up all that I can out of this life. This is all that I have. I must indulge myself now. You could even say, I need to lose myself.

Give myself over to my passions. This is what Paul drives at in Philippians 3. There he describes the enemies of the cross of Christ.

And he says, their end is destruction. Their God is their belly. And they glory in their shame. That is a clear description.

[11:01] That is the opposite of being self-controlled and sober-minded. Drunk on the spirit of this present evil age. This is not to be us.

To be self-controlled. To be sober-minded. Your translation may say clear-minded. Is to be thinking rightly. To have a mind that is not fuzzy because of sin.

1 Peter isn't the only place, chapter 4, where Peter talks about sober-mindedness. And where he talks about being clear-headed. Earlier in his letter, he does it.

And later as well. Chapter 1, verse 13. He says, Therefore, preparing your minds for action and being sober-minded, set your hope fully on the grace that will be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ.

There we see it. Be sober-minded. And he's even talking here, like he does in chapter 4, about the return of Christ. He says, Setting our hope fully on the future.

[12:12] When Christ returns. The future is in the context here. Be sober-minded now. What else does he set? Prepare your minds for action.

We should have minds that are spiritually sharpened. We should have minds that are ready to go. This paints something of a mental picture of a soldier who is ready for battle.

He's prepared. You can't be prepared if you're drunk. If your mind is fuzzy and out of focus. If your mind isn't clear.

So to be self-controlled, to be sober-minded, means also to have prepared your mind for action. We see that in chapter 1. Now how about we flip forward to chapter 5, where we see sober-mindedness brought up again.

Verse 8. Verse 8 reads, Be sober-minded. And then immediately following, Peter says, Be watchful. Or be on high alert.

[13:19] And here in chapter 5, verse 8, he continues by saying, Your adversary, the devil, prowls around like a roaring lion seeking someone to devour.

Every once in a while, a story will hit the news about a lion that has escaped from captivity in somebody's home. You've probably heard of these instances, these crazy people who are raising lions in their, on their property.

They want them as pets. And then those lions escape. And we hear about it in the news. Lions are roaming in the neighborhood. It is hard to imagine anything that would sober you up more than the thought that there could be a lion walking down our street.

It's not on the plains in the savannah. It is possibly in your garden. That would change the way that we live our lives. That gets our attention. We are sober-minded.

We are ready. Kids, you're not going outside to play today because we're on the lookout for that lion. This is how we are to live the Christian life.

[14:30] Disciplined because the end of all things is near. Christ is coming. We must be prepared. We must be ready.

So Colossians 3 says, set your minds on things that are above, not on things that are on earth. For you have died and your life is hidden with Christ in God.

When Christ, who is your life, appears, then you also will appear with him in glory. And then we're given a description in the following verses of things that are earthly.

Listen to these sins. Sexual immorality, impurity, passion, evil desire, covetousness, which is idolatry.

So Christ is coming for those who are his. When he appears, he who is your life, you will appear with him in glory. Christ is coming for those who are his.

[15:33] But for those who are not his, those who continue to live in unrepentant sin, like the sin listed there in Colossians 3, something else is coming.

Colossians 3, 6 says, on account of these things, the wrath of God is coming. So we all have something coming. Every single one of us in this room has something coming.

Either Christ, who is our life, is coming for us. Or, the wrath of God is coming.

When Christ appears, how will you greet him? with joy at his return? Overjoyed that he has come again for you?

Or will you grieve because the reality has hit that the wrath of God is upon you? If you're not in Christ this morning, please see it here in God's word.

[ 16 : 35 ] The end of all things is near. Christ is coming again. and so is the wrath of God for all of those who refuse to repent. I plead with you, trust in Christ today so that when he comes, you may join with all the other saints who have believed the good news that Jesus died on the cross and rose again and you too can rejoice at his appearing, not shrink back in shame.

Jesus is ready to receive all who come to him and you too can be ready for when he comes again. Now for us who are in Christ, that future day should now drive us to holiness. The end of all things is at hand, therefore be sober minded, be self controlled, be on guard, be on alert.

Why do we need to also be on alert? Because the temptation to sin remains. The temptation to set our minds on earthly things, on sinful desires, still remains.

How might we be tempted to get drunk on the spirit of this age? Think about just entertainment.

How readily we have entertainment available to us.

[ 18 : 01 ] Some of which is inherently sinful, some of it not inherently sinful, and yet how easily we can get drunk on that entertainment. Or we could call it amusement.

What does the word amusement mean? Without musing, without thinking. How easily we can lose the sober mindedness and be those who are not thinking.

So Peter is teaching us that for the Christian, our minds should be rightly ordered. We should be thinking straight. We should have our priorities in line.

Minds that are set on things above and not things of earth. Now there are lots of good reasons for us to be sober minded. You and I can provide a better defense for the hope that is within us if we are sober minded.

You and I can love those around us better if we are thinking clearly. We can fight against sin better if we are thinking clearly. Those are all true.

[ 19 : 11 ] Peter gives us another good reason here in this verse. He says be sober minded, be self controlled for the sake of your prayers. So you and I can pray better if we are thinking clearly.

Now we can see this connection can't we? You can't pray well if your thinking is distorted. If your thoughts are muddled and unfocused and confused and straying, if you are easily distracted by the cares of this life, if you are wrapped up in pursuing the things of this world, your prayers will be affected.

And we need to hear that Peter said prayers. Not just one prayer, but the pattern or habit of prayers in our lives. we want those prayers to be sharp.

We want those prayers to be rightly focused, putting first things first. Isn't that how Jesus teaches us to pray in the Lord's prayer?

Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done on earth as it is in heaven. That future day is coming.

[ 20 : 29 ] God's kingdom will arrive in all of its fullness. Do your prayers eagerly anticipate that day? Do your prayers reflect that?

Are you thinking rightly? Are your priorities in line? There's a place to pray for all kinds of present needs, but are your prayers lacking a future focus?

Are the words come Lord Jesus on your lips? Or is your prayer life undisciplined, self-seeking even, entirely concerned with your present circumstances?

Don't hear me wrong, there is a place to pray for our present circumstances. We should pray for those needs, but is your mind rightly focused first on the things that God says are to be the priority of our prayers?

others. The end of all things is at hand. Don't mindlessly wait. We need to keep thinking clearly. So that's the first way that we can live productive Christian lives as we await the return of Christ.

[ 21 : 37 ] Let's consider the second. We keep loving earnestly. Let's read verse 8 together. Above all, keep loving one another earnestly, since love covers a multitude of sins.

I think many of us would agree that Amazon is a very convenient way to shop. You purchase something, it's at your door. These days, it could be the very next day, it could be hours later, you've got it.

It's convenient, but it comes at a price. You can't be quite sure of the quality of the product that you are getting. And especially in our day of all of the AI technology, you look at a product on Amazon, they've put it in some fake room surrounded by people you're not even sure are real, and you really can't tell how much of a quality product you're buying.

You can read the reviews, but sometimes those reviews still don't give you that kind of understanding, and that product arrives, you open it, and you realize it is cheap, it is plastic, it is not the quality that you are looking for.

Our love for one another should be nothing like products that we buy on Amazon. Our product, our love should not be superficial, our love should not be surface level.

[ 23 : 05 ] Perhaps your translation says that we should love one another deeply, it should be sincere, it should be genuine, earnest.

Now this love is not natural to us. It is a love that springs forth from an imperishable seed that has been planted deeply into us.

Peter teaches us that back in chapter 1. He says in verse 22, love one another earnestly from a pure heart. Same idea. And then he says this, since you have been born again, not of perishable seed, but of imperishable through the living and abiding word of God.

So what he means is this, you Christian can love sincerely because God has supernaturally planted his life-giving word in you, like a seed that is planted into the soil.

You've been born again to spiritual life, and those who have this new life will love in a new way. So we love more deeply because the life-giving word has taken deep root in our hearts.

[ 24 : 26 ] Now of course in chapter 1 and in chapter 4 it's a command, which means that it requires effort. We must work to love deeply by that grace that God provides.

love. So do you love in this way? And perhaps you think, I'm not sure. Do I love earnestly? Do I love deeply?

I'm not sure. Well here is one way that we can measure the earnestness or the sincerity, the depth of our love. One way that we can test just how true our love is.

when we are sinned against, how do we respond? When a brother or a sister in Christ wrongs us, what is our reaction to them?

Peter says biblical love covers a multitude of sins. So if we love one another sincerely, we will be able to overlook offenses.

[ 25 : 28 ] Proverbs 10-12 says, hatred stirs up strife, but love covers all offenses. So to love earnestly means that we are long-suffering with each other.

It means that we put up with each other, that we are quick to forgive one another, that when we are wronged, we are patient, and we have enduring love towards each other.

Peter here was well-schooled in this principle of love covering a multitude of sins. Jesus had taught Peter forgiveness and had been able to ask the Lord this very question, Lord, how often will my brother sin against me and I forgive him?

As many as seven times? That would have felt like a lot to Peter because Jewish thought in that day said three times, up to three times. So Peter is saying, I'm going further than that.

let me say seven. How does Jesus respond? Jesus blows up Peter's view. He says, I do not say to you seven times, but 77 times.

[ 26 : 42 ] Over and over and over again. Those who cover sins have that kind of forgiving, loving spirit towards one another. Now that's not to say that we treat sin as no big deal.

That's not to say that we should just brush it off always and ignore it. There are many times that the most loving thing that we can do is confront a brother or a sister.

Interestingly, when Jesus taught Peter about love or about forgiveness in Matthew 18, he also taught about confronting brothers and sisters in that same chapter, chapter 18 of Matthew.

That's where we read, if your brother sins against you, go and tell him his fault. So there are times that loving confrontation is absolutely necessary, especially when it's a public sin that brings dishonor to the name of Christ.

Perhaps it's a sin that's become a pattern in someone's life. There's a time to confront. But we need to balance that understanding of the need to confront at times with the need to also overlook at times.

[ 27 : 54 ] And in either case, we're called to have a posture of forgiveness. Whether we're confronting or whether we're overlooking, we are ready to forgive that brother or that sister. And

when we do overlook, we're seeking to not escalate the situation.

We hold our tongue. We endure that moment of sharp critique from a spouse. Or we endure those harsh words from a brother.

We look to extinguish the flames rather than to feed them with our response. And we certainly don't use the sins that are committed against us as an excuse to then sin against and attack back that brother or sister.

How we respond to sin demonstrates the true measure of our love. When we've been hurt, does our supposed love change to anger and bitterness and strife?

How could he say that to me? How could she do that to me? That superficial plastic love is all around us in the world.

[ 29 : 07 ] It is a love that melts away quickly to anger and bitterness and hatred towards others. It's easy to say that we love when times are good, when relationships are healthy and whole.

Our love for each other, though, is not grounded in those good feelings as much as we enjoy those times of peace. It is an ongoing choice and the depth of it is displayed when sin rears its ugly head. So let's love each other earnestly. That's the second way that we live a productive life as we await the return of Christ. Let's consider the third way. We welcome cheerfully.

We welcome cheerfully. Read with me verse 9. Show hospitality to one another without grumbling. So here we have a mark of the Christian community.

Hospitality. Broadly speaking, this is this general warmth and willingness to welcome others into our world. So there's a sense in which we can be hospitable towards one another wherever we are.

[ 30 : 20 ] Even today, in this room, we can be hospitable towards each other, inviting each other into our world, seeking to know each other more deeply. That can happen in lots of settings.

But there's a good argument for also saying this is most clearly experienced, most clearly felt when we welcome each other into our homes. For the first century Christians that Peter was writing to, there was a serious need to do this.

They didn't have large buildings to gather in for worship, so they met in homes. People had to open up their homes so they could worship together. Christians would travel, and of course travel was less safe and efficient as it is now.

We have Airbnbs, we have Verbos galore, we have hotels, remember those things? Hotels, we have all of those things. We can safely travel one place to another, less so in the first century. So people would open up their homes. Instead of going to the inn, which was perhaps not a safe place, Christians would say, no, come, stay with us. Now we think about our own world today.

[ 31 : 31 ] The need might not be felt as strongly, but hospitality isn't just about meeting those physical, tangible needs. It's one thing for us to gather together, to be able to enjoy fellowship with one another in this building, to even be able to have a meal with each other in the fellowship hall after service, to sit over food together.

It is good to do that in this building, but how much more intimate is it to do it in one another's homes, to invite someone else into your world, to see where you live, to see how your family has your layout, to see how you interact with each other in your natural environment, not to invite each other into our very lives.

And we can often think of our homes as something of a refuge from the stress and the trouble of everything out there.

We have a long day at work, we come home to our home, and it's a place of refuge. My dad, growing up, didn't get a cell phone until he retired.

Now, in our day and age, that is kind of crazy. We all have cell phones. My dad didn't have a cell phone for years. Why? Because he didn't want work to follow him home. So he didn't get that free cell phone with all the perks that came with it because he wanted to come through the door, he wanted to focus on his family.

[ 32 : 56 ] He wanted to be done with work and just be with us. Now, that's a good thing. I think we would all say that is admirable. But we can take it a step further, can't we?

We can take it a step further and say, I come into my home and I get away from everyone and everything. No one is welcome into my domain.

I don't just want work to not follow me, as good as that is. I don't want anything to follow me. I don't want anyone here. We retreat to get away from people.

Well, God's word is calling us to get away from that kind of thinking. And we can come up with a million excuses. The season of our life makes it hard.

Our house is a mess. Our house is now clean. I don't want it to be a mess. Our schedule is so full. [ 33 : 52 ] Our schedule is finally free. Let's enjoy our evening. The bathroom remodel isn't finished. finished. The bathroom remodel is finished.

I don't want anybody else in there. We don't have anything to eat. It's been a long week. The list could go on. Colin Horn, guilty as charged on all of those accounts multiple times over. Now, I understand that there are legitimate reasons that it may be harder for some of us than others to invite folks over. And that's where we have to go back to that root of hospitality. It is an attitude of open-heartedness that perhaps is best expressed in the home, but it's not necessarily always needed to be expressed in the home.

We can warmly welcome one another into our lives. We can do that without necessarily stepping over the threshold of our homes. But what a blessing that it is when we can and we do invite others over.

[ 35 : 00 ] When we burst wide those physical doors. So let's be careful that we don't make excuses to not show hospitality. And let's be careful when we do show hospitality to not grumble in doing that.

Do we see that there in verse 9? Show hospitality to one another without grumbling. Peter's telling us here to show hospitality without secretly wishing that we hadn't.

Now we probably aren't telling people, I wish I hadn't invited you over. And hopefully we're not thinking that way because it's anything those people did. But remember those excuses. It's been a long week.

And I invite someone over and now I feel extra tired and I begin to in my heart rumble that I did that. But our internal grumbling only serves to justify our future excuse making to have people over again.

Oh, I remember it was kind of hard last time. So I'm not going to do it again this time. So we need to undercut that. Cut out that grumbling so that we cheerfully welcome one another into our lives.

[ 36 : 17 ] God tells us, cheerfully welcome others into our homes or anywhere else that we find each other. We open ourselves up to one another. We receive each other with warmth.

And we do this not just with those that we are most comfortable with. Hospitality also involves an element of doing it with strangers, with guests, with those that we perhaps don't know as well and are not naturally drawn to in the same way.

Cheerfully welcome those outside your circle of comfort. The newcomer, your open-heartedness ought to extend to them as well. So are you taking the initiative?

Are you taking the initiative with perhaps the least likely person that you would naturally show hospitality toward? That's a measure of true hospitality.

We look to welcome the stranger. And is it not true that Christ welcomed us? And far worse, we were despicable, wicked sinners under God's wrath condemned and Christ came and he welcomed us.

[ 37 : 34 ] He went to the cross for us. How much more should we welcome one another? Well, that's the third way that we are to live productive Christian lives. Let's consider the fourth way.

We keep serving humbly. We keep serving humbly. Let's read verses 10 and 11. As each has received a gift, use it to serve one another as good stewards of God's varied grace.

Whoever speaks as one who speaks oracles of God. Whoever serves as one who serves by the strength that God supplies in order that in everything God may be glorified through Jesus Christ. To him belong glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen. So we have gifts. The scriptures and other places call them spiritual gifts.

They are gifts that the Spirit has given to us. Now before we unpack these verses briefly and see in more detail what they have to say, we need to consider what they don't say.

[ 38 : 39 ] That all-pressing question that at least entered my mind in reading these kinds of passages. But Peter, how do we know what our spiritual gifts are?

How do we determine what our spiritual gifts are? Peter doesn't say. He skips that part. He just jumps right in. As each has received a gift, use it.

You have a gift, now get to serving with it. That's interesting. The focus here isn't so much on figuring out our gifts.

The focus is on serving, with whatever gifts you may have been given. So perhaps you don't have much confidence in knowing what your spiritual gift is.

Perhaps you are wondering that. You are a Christian. Only Christians can have spiritual gifts. Don't be complacent. Don't fade into the background.

[ 39 : 40 ] You are a vital member of this body. God has given you a gift. That you might bless the body of Christ. Peter says, as each has received a gift.

You have it. Now look for ways to serve. Because we should be obedient to the Lord. And the command that he gave us here in this verse is, serve.

He calls us not to figure out the gift here. He calls us to serve. serve. And the more regularly we serve in the body, the more clearly we see the ways in which the body is blessed and the Lord is glorified.

So whatever gift that we have, they are gifts that we have received. We see that clearly. God gives the gifts. And we see that they are gifts that he enables us to use.

Now there are lots of passages that talk about spiritual gifts. Here in 1 Peter 4, it's not a list of gifts. It's two categories. Speaking and serving. Whatever category our gifting may be in though, it is God who supplies.

[ 40 : 53 ] What is it that those who speak are to speak? Not their own words. The oracles of God. God's words. Not mine. God's. Those who serve, how are they to serve?

In the strength that they have themselves? No. In the strength that God provides. In all of this, we are serving, we are speaking, not in our own gifting, but in the gifts that God has given and with the ability that God has given.

And so it makes sense. Whatever is accomplished in using those gifts, we don't say, well, look at me and look at my greatness of this gift. We say, no. Look at God.

Not to us be the glory, but to him. And that's exactly what Peter says, isn't it? That in everything, God may be glorified through Jesus Christ.

And so we serve humbly. The text doesn't say humbly, but everything in it screams, be humble. You have nothing to say, look at me.

[ 42 : 01 ] We have everything to say, look at God. So we serve in the strength he supplies that he may be glorified. To him belong glory and dominion forever and ever.

And when is that glory and dominion going to be fully and finally realized? When Christ returns. The end of all things is at hand.

Christ is coming again. What will you be doing until he comes? Will you be standing at the window and waiting?

Will you have your face plastered to the glass? Will you be staring up at the sky like you're watching a solar eclipse? Or will you be living a productive Christian life in obedience to the Lord?

Will you be thinking clearly? Will you be loving earnestly? Will you be welcoming cheerfully? And will you be serving humbly? Because Christ will come again.

[ 43 : 06 ] And in that day we look forward to hearing those words, well done, good and faithful servant. Let's pray together. Heavenly Father, we give you thanks that you have given your word to us.

You have given us clear directive in how we are to live in anticipation of the return of your son.

Father, we pray that we would use our time well, that we would be wise, that we would not waste the time, but that we would redeem it.

We pray, Father, that you would enable us by your spirit to live in these ways. We can't do it in our own strength, so give us grace, we pray, that we might do all things to your glory and your honor.

We pray these things in Christ's name. Amen. Amen. Amen.