

Series: The Next Life

Title: "Longing for the Return of Christ"

2 Peter 3:1-16

Introduction

Jesus will establish God's eternal kingdom when he returns, which is why we should study what impact that will have upon us and how we should prepare ourselves now. Eager anticipation of Jesus' return is a dominant theme in the New Testament.

1. In Matthew 24, Jesus describes how he will terminate this evil world order being established now and _____ it with God's kingdom.
2. Peter encourages believers to "fix our _____ completely" on Jesus' return.
3. Jude tells us that one of the main ways to stay anchored in God's love is by "eagerly _____" his mercy at Jesus' return.
4. Jesus _____ us to pray for this in the Our Father prayer of Matthew 6.
5. Paul _____ this Second Coming theme in 1 Corinthians 16:22.
6. When John receives the Revelation that Jesus is coming soon, John _____ the New Testament with, "Amen, Come Lord Jesus!"
7. Even if you belong to Jesus and have his Spirit, this anticipation is not a given. It's a longing that must be _____.

I. Jesus - Our Greatest Desire

8. Relationships are first a matter of the _____!
9. Peter is describing people who scornfully _____ the Bible's teaching on the return of Jesus Christ to this world.
10. What motivated these mockers? It was simply based on their _____.

11. "Desires" is the word *epithumia*, which means "inordinate desire." It means wanting a good thing to its _____.
12. _____ is a matter of seeking security, significance, and approval from created things rather than from your relationship with God.
13. It was these lustful desires that motivated the mockers, and it is these same desires that chill our hearts and _____ our passion for Jesus to return.
14. _____ this hunger involves being honest with yourself and asking, "What is my greatest desire?"
15. Things in this life get in the way and _____ us from making our relationship with Christ more important than any other relationship.
16. It is not attending a banquet of the wicked that dulls our appetite for heaven, but rather the endless sampling and tasting at the table of _____.
17. The greatest adversary of God's love is not his enemies but his material _____.
18. When life's pleasures replace your desire for God himself, your idolatry is scarcely recognizable and almost _____.
19. So what can you do if you have this heart problem? Go to Jesus and confess the problem with humble honesty, cast yourself on his mercy, and tell him that you want Him to be your heart's true _____.

II. Jesus - His Soon Return

20. Sometimes the problem is in our heads—our heart gets discouraged because our head is _____.
21. Our desire for Christ's return can also wane because we can't understand why He is waiting so long, especially when so many people are _____.

22. It only seems slow to us because our _____ on time is different from God's, who is eternal.
23. But God's plan also takes longer to complete because his scope of concern is _____ than just me.
24. Jesus is waiting because he wants as many people as possible to repent, believe in him, and escape eternal _____.
25. He doesn't plan to wait _____!
26. When Jesus returns to this earth, it will be the _____ of the world as we know it.
27. Those who have not received Jesus as Savior will experience His coming like a _____ in the night.
28. No _____ will be sufficient to rescue you from God's eternal judgment.

III. Jesus - Proclaim His Name

29. We need to put our "_____ " to work actively pursuing his interests and proclaiming his name.
30. Your heart will follow what you invest your _____ in.
31. Your hunger for Jesus' return will _____ as we invest our lives in proclaiming His name and doing what he wants.
32. The sooner we finish the Great Commission, the sooner Jesus will _____!
33. What Jesus wants most is for more people to come to faith in Him and _____ the coming judgment.
34. Peter _____ "looking forward to" Jesus' coming (longing for His return) and "hurrying up" Christ's coming.

35. When you tell your family, friends, neighbors, and work associates about Jesus, your hearts will _____ even more for His return.
36. When you invest your life and resources this way, your heart will _____!

Conclusion

37. We must love _____ with our hearts, our head, and our hands!

If you live as a consumer and relate to Jesus as just one more "product" to add to your list, your life will become more and more complicated and anxious, and disappointing. But when you love Jesus with your heart, head, and hands, your life will become much simpler and fuller, and your longing for Jesus to return will grow.

Answers

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| 1. replace | 14. Cultivating | 27. thief |
| 2. hope | 15. hinder | 28. excuse |
| 3. awaiting | 16. worldliness | 29. hands |
| 4. taught | 17. gifts | 30. lives |
| 5. echoes | 18. incurable | 31. grow |
| 6. closes | 19. treasure | 32. come |
| 7. nurtured | 20. confused | 33. escape |
| 8. heart | 21. suffering | 34. connects |
| 9. dismiss | 22. perspective | 35. hunger |
| 10. desires | 23. broader | 36. follow |
| 11. extreme | 24. judgment | 37. Jesus |
| 12. Idolatry | 25. forever | |
| 13. dull | 26. end | |

QUESTIONS FOR MEDITATION

1. Is your relationship with God more important to you than anything else in this life? Is Jesus your greatest desire? If not, what is most important to you? Why?
2. Are you excited about the promise that Jesus is coming back or do you hope Jesus doesn't return for a long time? Why do you feel that way? What do you desire more than you want to see Jesus?
3. What do you think about? How do you spend your money? What do you spend your time doing?

