

PERISHABLE

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THAT NONE SHOULD PERISH!

2 PETER 3:7-14

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People Are Perishable!

- To perish: For the life of a person on this earth to end and for the person to continue existence in eternal judgment for an unrepentant life, vv. 6, 9.
- God, in the times of Noah, caused all but eight in a generation to perish and enter eternal judgment through a worldwide flood, vv. 6-7.
- God will, in the future, cause all but those without a saving faith in the Lord Jesus Christ to perish and enter eternal judgment through a fire that consumes the earth and the heavens, v. 10.
- God will create a new heaven and earth where the righteous and righteousness alone will dwell, v. 13.
- God is not willing that any should perish, as He is passionate to call all people to salvation through saving faith in His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ, and to live a repentant life, v. 9.
- God's people share His passion to call all people(s) to salvation through saving faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, vv. 11-13.
 - Since the purpose of God's work in this present world is to bring the message of salvation to all, God's people work passionately to complete the task of bringing the Good News of salvation to all.

P A S T O R ' S C H A T

I go for walks in the morning and after dinner, and I know the seasons are changing as I set out in the dark first thing in the morning and as the dimness of the light at evening reminds me the sun is soon to set. I love the seasons and I miss them from growing up in Michigan. For us here in Southern California the seasons are more recognized by the timing of sunrise and sunset. As Fall comes it finds us being gripped by the sense of the seasons of time changing. Time, in a sense, has been suspended between the first coming of the Lord Jesus Christ and His second coming. The coming of Jesus will be like a combination of sunrise and sunset. For the church, the coming of the Lord Jesus is the promise of the endless days of living in His presence. As the Apostle Peter describes in 2 Peter 1:19, the coming of Jesus is the dawning of day for us and we will live forever in the light of Him, the Morning Star.

For the world though the second coming of Jesus will be the coming of an eternal night. Those who live unrepentant lives are heading for eternal darkness. God is light and, for eternity, people with unrepentant lives will live in utter darkness. I remember being part of a tour of the catacombs of Rome. The catacombs are seemingly endless tunnels that were used for burials and were also used as places of worship for the first century church. While we were there, the guide extinguished all light and for a moment we were in utter darkness. I find utter darkness incredibly disorienting and disturbing. I can only imagine what it will be like to spend forever in utter darkness. A darkness haunted by what Jesus calls people's weeping and gnashing of teeth.

Jesus and the Bible teach us that the sign of the time of God moving to the soon coming of Jesus, is Jerusalem. Jesus promised that Jerusalem would be destroyed and the Jewish people dispersed around the world. But at the end of the age, God will bring the Jewish people back to the land of Israel and will establish Jerusalem and the capitol of a Jewish nation, though living in troubled times, Luke 21:24, Zechariah 12:1-5.

We are the only generation to see that promise fulfilled. It is the sign that the night of judgment for the world, and the light of eternal day for the Church, is coming soon.

This Fall the sense of time and its urgency will be the theme of our Fall preaching series, *Perishable*. As people, we are unique from other beings God created for this world. For all other beings death is the end of existence. There is no afterlife for any other being. Yet for man death brings not the end but the entrance to eternity. Every person will live for eternity either in the light of Jesus or in the eternal darkness forever separated from God and any chance to repent. The Greek translation of the word "perish" means "to destroy". It does not refer to death, for all will pass through death except those alive when Jesus comes for His Church. To perish means to enter the eternal judgment of God. Jesus came so that we might not perish, but have eternal life, John 3:16.

As we look at the 7.6 billion people alive today we know that God is not willing that any of them would perish, 2 Peter 3:9. God has a passion to save. He has a passion that each one of the 7.6 billion people has a chance to hear of salvation by faith in the Lord Jesus Christ and the call that each should repent and turn to follow Jesus in life. This Fall we want to capture the passion of God for people to hear the Good News of salvation. This Fall we want to follow Jesus in the world to seek the lost and bring them home to God, John 20:21. This Fall we want to call on the Lord of the harvest to send us into the harvest fields. We want to live, serve, and give with the sacrificial passion of those who live in the growing darkness of the coming of the eternal night. We want to work, as Jesus said, as those who work knowing the night is coming when the mission of the Church is done and we are home, John 9:4. Let's pray that God grips us this Fall with His passion for those who are perishing. Pray for the harvest!

~ Senior Pastor Byron MacDonald