

Title: **Final Directions to the Last Stop (Part 1)**

Passage: **2 Peter 3:14**

Theme: **Avoiding the dangers of a lost reward**

Number: **06122Pe3.14(37)**

Date: **June 17, 2012**

{Read Passage}

Do you know what it's like to sit alone in t/shadows of someone else's parade?

Have you ever been a lonely buoy in the wake of a celebration that wasn't for you?

Example from the life of a man by the name of H.C. Morrison.

Morrison was a missionary to China. On a furlough back home to the United States he found himself traveling on the same ship as then President Teddy Roosevelt who was returning from a safari in Africa. As they entered t/NY harbor, Morrison looked out over the deck rail to see myriads of people there to celebrate the President's homecoming. There were bands playing music, large banners welcoming him home. And Morrison began to feel a touch of self-pity: He poured his life out in China while the President was on a vacation, yet it seemed as no one cared, much less noticed. As t/ship docked he stood as a near solitary figure, invisible to t/masses who celebrated Roosevelt's return home. And then it struck him: "I'm not home yet."

As it relates to our lives the final stop is t/most important. Easy to get caught up in seeing the sights along the way, and that's not always bad so long as we are mindful that t/trip is all about getting home safely.

That so sums up the Xn life, doesn't it? Lots of metaphors used in Scripture: It's a race // contest // walk of life—a trek thru life.

John Bunyan styled it a journey – a trip from t/city of Destruction to t/Celestial City. It's a journey with many dangers, hazards, discouragements, tests, trials (rewards and joys).

If there's one thing that marks t/journey it's perseverance. That's why I'm so fanatical about t/biblical reformed doctrine by that name: Perseverance of the Saints. It's all about persevering in our journey through a wasteland of sin to t/prize on t/other side.

For t/believer, it's all about getting home.

Not that God has left us to our own devices. We have His promises – that which cheered Pilgrim along on his journey as he carried it close to his chest. As Peter put it in chapter 1 –

2 Peter 1:3–4 3 . . . His divine power has granted to us everything pertaining to life and godliness, through the true knowledge of Him who called us by His own glory and excellence. 4 For by these He has granted to us His precious and magnificent promises, so that by them you may become partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world by lust.

Make no mistake – the world is corrupted by lust, the desire for power, prominence, pleasure.

In his first letter, Peter draws from t/metaphor of t/Xn as a pilgrim passing through a sinful world when he writes in 2:11 ==>

Beloved, I urge you as aliens and strangers to abstain from fleshly lusts which wage war against the soul.

Like any good pastor, T/Apost. Peter is concerned that those under his charge get home safely.

He knew that he was nearing the end of his own journey. He wrote about that in chapter 1 ==>

14 knowing that the laying aside of my earthly dwelling is imminent, as also our Lord Jesus Christ has made clear to me.

He also wanted them to remember all of his instructions and warnings, even after his death, something he wrote about in the next verse ==>

15 And I will also be diligent that at any time after my departure you will be able to call these things to mind.

Like a general giving his troops their final marching orders, Peter here in chapt. 3 gives his last words of exhortation to t/CH that we would find our way safely home to eternity w/X – What I'm calling *Final Directions to the Last Stop*.

There are 5 points in that regard ==>

I. A Day to Remember (14)

II. A Delay to Consider (15)

III. A Danger to Avoid (16)

IV. A Discipline to Pursue (17-18a)

V. A Doxology to Cherish (18b)

With that in mind turn your attention to verse 14.

I. A Day to Remember (14)

A. What "day" is that? What *day* are we to remember or keep in mind?

1. What we've seen t/o chapter 3

It's ==>

the promise of His coming (v. 4)

the day of judgment and destruction of ungodly men (7)

the day of the Lord [that] will come like a thief (10)

the day of God (12)

2. Peter is saying, "Remember that day" (v. 14)

Therefore, beloved, since you look for these things . . .

IOW - you're not like those who mock t/idea that Christ will come again, who laugh at any concept of future judgment.

No, you look forward to and desire that day (v. 12).

Remember, Theme of vv. 3-9 centered around t/Promise of X's Coming (future event). 10-13 center on what it means to live in light of that future event – "Living in light of 2 worlds".

We're in transit.

Our eyes are toward heaven while our feet are here on earth.

As believers we live in the shadow of two worlds: the present creation that will pass away with the coming of Christ and the future recreation that we will inherit based upon God's promise.

How are we to live our lives as believers who are in t/shadow of those 2 worlds?

As we saw in vv. 10-13 ==>

1. We are to live hopefully: knowing that Christ will return (10a)

But the day of the Lord will come like a thief . . .

Certainty here. Could be translated:

But the day of the Lord will most certainly come . . .

Not only are we to live hopefully (focus on t/future), we're also to live soberly (focus on the present) ==>

II. . . . understanding that this world is temporary (10b)

When we talk about this world being temporary we don't just mean t/physical world (v. 11) we're also talking about t/system.

The physical world, though fallen, still displays God's glory

Psalm 19:1 **The heavens are telling of the glory of God; And their expanse is declaring the work of His hands.**

The physical creation reflects God's glory. The sinful system of t/world, on other hand, puts on display those things that glorify fallen humanity.

These are t/things we're warned about (Rom. 12:2).

This is a true test of discipleship: Do I love t/things of God or t/things of t/world? Those 2 domains are at odds w/one another.

Incompatible. As Paul writes in 2 Corinthians 6

14 what partnership have righteousness and lawlessness, or what fellowship has light with darkness? 15 Or what harmony has Christ with Belial, or what has a believer in common with an unbeliever? 16 Or what agreement has the temple of God with idols? 17 "Therefore, COME OUT FROM THEIR MIDST AND BE SEPARATE," says the Lord . . .

In Ephesians chapter 4 Paul warns us that we cannot live lives that are indistinguishable from t/world. In futility of mind, darkened, excluded

from t/life of God, hardened hearts, given over to sensuality and greed and every kind of impurity.

4:20 But you did not learn Christ in this way,

James calls friendship with the world hostility toward God. Tantamount to spiritual adultery.

John tells us in 1 John chapter 2

15 Do not love the world, nor the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. 16 For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh and the lust of the eyes and the boastful pride of life, is not from the Father, but is from the world.

Those things are so tempting. We all struggle with them. Those of us who are older, yes, but especially those who are younger.

From those teenage years through t/20s there's such a powerful draw to be like the world.

Wasn't that long ago that we wouldn't have included twenty-somethings in this category but as sociologists have observed we have extended adolescence into that 3rd decade of life. Used to be that you finished H.S. & were an adult: got a job / married / started a family. Now you finish H.S., get a temp. job & go to college where you party & fornicate & act like you're still 17. Many continue that pattern even into their 30s. They never grow up.

It's t/foolish error of living for the now. (Even that is empty.)

But wait until you get on t/other side & find out what you've become. Women & men in their 30s and 40s who have had countless sexual encounters, married and divorced, fleeting beauty, fickle friends, superficial relationships. Filling their lives with empty ambitions and addictions.

Not to mention t/fact that each one will one day stand naked B4 a holy God to give an account.

What's really important? What really matters? That I'm looked upon as "cool?" // I have nice things? // That I have romance? // I'm looked up to?

Those things fleeting / temporary ==>

17 And the world is passing away, and {also} its lusts; but the one who does the will of God abides forever.

Cheap trade: Pleasure of now for t/penalty of the future.

II. *We are to live soberly: understanding that this world is temporary*

A. The heavens will pass away with a roar (10b)

1. Onomatopoeic word only used here in the NT - ῥοιζηδὸν

Sounds like what it describes (snakes hiss, whirl of a bird's wings, whoosh sound of an arrow, roar of a fire).

2. The elements will be destroyed with burning heat

3. The earth and its works will be exposed

Everything that men have done, said, thought, failed to do while on this earth will be exposed to God's judgment.

How is that any comfort? The 16th c. Heidelberg Catechism (University of Heidelberg, Germany) is an evangelical doctrinal standard that takes t/form of 129 questions and answers.

Q 52. How does Christ's return "to judge the living and the dead" comfort you?

A. In all my distress and persecution I turn my eyes to the heavens and confidently await as judge the very One who has already stood trial in my place before God and so has removed the whole curse from me. All his enemies and mine he will condemn to everlasting punishment: but me and all his chosen ones he will take along with him into the joy and glory of heaven.

III. We are to live diligently: focusing on the task at hand (11)

Since all these things are to be destroyed in this way, what kind of people ought you to be in holy conduct and godliness,

A. All 3 words are plural

"holies" + "conducts" + "godlinesses" – Our good works are multi-faceted. Actions and attitudes. What we do and what we don't do. Things like humility, love, grace, kindness, service. Love for God's Word and God's people. Hunger for His Word, devotion to prayer, hatred of sin. mercy to t/perishing.

I. We are to live hopefully: knowing that Christ will return

II. We are to live soberly: understanding that this world is temporary

III. We are to live diligently: focusing on the task at hand

IV. We are to live expectantly: looking forward to the glories of Christ (12-13)

awaiting and earnestly desiring the coming of the day of God, on account of which the heavens will be destroyed by burning and the elements will dissolve with intense heat!

But according to His promise we are expecting new heavens and a new earth, in which righteousness dwells.

That's t/connection to v. 14

I. A Day to Remember (14)

Therefore, beloved, since you look for these things . . .

. . . be diligent . . .

B. ΣΠΟΥΔΑΖΩ = to be zealous, make very effort (Imperative)

Same word / same form is used in 1:10 ==>

Therefore, brethren, be all the more diligent to make certain about His calling and choosing you; for as long as you practice these things, you will never stumble;

. . . be diligent to be found by Him spotless and blameless, [and] in peace.

C. Three Questions: Found by who, when and how?

1. Who = Christ

2. When = at His coming

3. How = spotless, blameless and in peace

a. Spotless (ἄσπιλος) – easy one to memorize!

Same word used by James where he says in 1:27 that we are to keep ourselves unstained (ἄσπιλος) by the world. Moral / ethical purity.

b. Blameless (ἀμώμητος) refers to being above reproach before the watching world

Spotless refers to who we are on the inside; blameless to what we look like on the outside.

(1) What do unbelievers see in your life as a disciple of Christ?

Do they see someone who is indistinguishable from them? Or do they see someone who is different.

We have to be careful here - what do we mean by "different"?

We don't mean Pharisaical or legalistic. The world, partic. our culture, has all kinds of false notions of what Xns are about. Stained glass saints who are known by all those things they don't do (smoke, drink, or otherwise have fun). We are to be different in that we have humbly made a break w/those things of t/world that are opposed to X.

Not crude, rude, worldly-minded, arrogant, foul-mouthed.

We out to be intelligent, sincere, humble, and, yes, holy (Xlike).

We ought to be diligent to live that way in order that we may be found by Christ in that self-same condition.

. . . to be found by Him spotless and blameless . . .

εὐρισκω "to be found" = carries t/idea of judgment. Judicial word in this context.

After all, that's why He chose us (Eph 1:4)

just as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before Him.

PHI 2:15 that you may prove yourselves to be blameless and innocent, children of God above reproach in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, among whom you appear as lights in the world,

What a contrast to the false teachers. How are they described?

Look at 2:13 ==>

... They are stains and blemishes, reveling in their deceptions...

σπίλοι καὶ μῶμοι

3:14b . . . be diligent to be found by Him spotless and blameless . . .

ἄσπιλοι καὶ ἀμώμητοι

1 Peter 1:19 [X] Lamb unblemished and spotless.

The false teachers were stains and blemishes; Christ was unblemished and spotless; those who follow Him are to be found the same.

Which standard are you going to follow? Libertinism, which is a blot on the face of Christ, or true Christlikeness, which not only serves to make one's calling sure, but glorifies Him before men and the hosts of heaven?

IOW - this is requisite for eternal life, in contrast to the libertines whose loose lives will testify against them on that day that they were not regenerate.

If there's absolutely no holiness, or no X-likeness, then there is no salvation. If there's no hunger for the things of God, no desire for and evidence of repentance, there's no salvation.

Nothing that stinks as much as a worldly man or woman who claims to know the other-worldly Savior; the man or woman who lives a life contrary to His purity and goodness.

Goes back to chapter 1 (cf. 1:8-11).

Evangelicals are disposed to emphasize at this point the imputed righteousness of Christ as the basis of our righteousness, and, of course, Christ's righteousness is the basis for all our righteousness. We should simply observe, however, that this is not what Peter emphasized here. In this context spotless and blameless behavior of believers is required to inherit the eternal reward. [Schreiner, 394]

This isn't a denial of grace, it's a denial of license. This isn't a denial that we are justified apart from works, it's an affirmation that where justification exists, sanctification follows.

"Christ saves no one whom He does not sanctify at the same time. . . . Thus it is clear how true it is that we are justified not without works, yet not through works, since our sharing in Christ, which justifies us, sanctification is just as much included as righteousness . . . the Lord freely justifies His own in order that He may at the same time restore them to true righteousness by sanctification of His Spirit." [John Calvin, Institutes, III:16:1; III:3:19]

Luther reflects t/teaching of Jesus when he states that ==>

"I have followed the rule not to minister comfort to any person except to those who have become contrite and are sorrowing because of their sin - those who have despaired of self-help, whom the law has terrified like a leviathan that has pounced upon them and almost perplexed them. For these are the people for whose sake Christ came into the world and He will not have a smoking flax to be quenched." [cited in Richard Alderson, *No*

Holiness, No Heaven!, 33]

Lastly ==>

. . . [**and**] **in peace.**

At peace w/God. Hope of entering into His presence with joy rather than experiencing His wrath

Having been justified by faith we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ (Romans 5:1)

For t/believer, it's all about getting home.

JUD 1:24 Now to Him who is able to keep you from stumbling, and to make you stand in the presence of His glory blameless with great joy,