

**Preaching Christ....
...by the power of the Holy Spirit
...and the authority of the Word of God**

Date: 13 December 2020
Service/s: *Across the Diocese*
Series: A Day is coming
Title: Where IS this coming?
Passage: 2 Peter 3:1-10
Outline: **Scoffers forget
Don't YOU forget**

INTRODUCTION

- There's a story of a finance broker who was cleaning out his attic one day when confronted by a genie who offered him one wish.
- His wish was this – to see the finance pages in the Fin Review one year from now...
- The wish was granted and he read all the stock reports with great interest (no pun intended!)
- Turning over the paper to put it down... he was in for a shock... for there in black and white – was his own obituary!
- Knowing life will end in a year... changes things...
- I recall when Susan's mother was dying – Joan was completing her tax return.... and she was answering the question 'do you expect this will be your last return?'; 'if so, why'... and answered without hesitation – Yes - because I'll be dead!!
- The testimony of many rescued or resuscitated people... those who have gone through near-death experiences – is that life is never the same again... there is a new perspective... they discover an inverted value system....
- ...all that they **thought** was **important** is no **longer**... all they thought was **UNimportant** suddenly has new **meaning**...
- My brothers and sisters in Christ, I sometimes wish we could all have a really big **fright**... something to **shock** us into the reality of living like **this** world is **temporary, like** as if the **material** things we value so highly will all be **gone**; something that would help us grasp the fact Jesus really could **come** back at any minute... something so that we might completely **reorganise** our lives having seen **finally** - once and for all - what is **really important**... //
- Well our passage this morning is designed to do **just that** – to shake us up – to **confront** us with the **certainty** that this world will most **definitely** come to an **end**... //
- We are spending **Advent** looking at the reality that a **day** is **coming**.
- Week **one** – we looked how a day is coming – with the result that we will **be** with the Lord **forever**.
- **Last** week – a **day** is **coming** – but we **don't know when**
- And **this** week – a day is coming – well – “where **IS** this coming?” – sub title – “**dealing** with the **scoffers**” – the **scoffers** who say – look – this day is **never** coming – we might as well give up and **live it up**....!! //
- There are **2 simple points** to make from the passage this morning... both around the theme of **forgetting**
 1. **SCOFFERS FORGET!**
 2. **DON'T YOU FORGET!**

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- Before we get to that first point – I want you to notice from the first two verses, that Peter’s aim in writing – is to – have a look with me at v2 – *I want you to recall the words spoken in the past by the holy prophets and the command given by our Lord and Saviour through your apostles.*
- In other words – he wants them to know their **Bibles** (our Old Testament) and what **Jesus** had told them (our New Testament).
- Friends – can I say – that knowing your **Bible** is **incredibly valuable...!**
- Christians who **know** and **love** their **Bibles** are **well equipped** to live for Jesus in this **world...**
- Not only on this whole topic of the **Day** that is to **come** – but for **trials**, facing **temptation**, **wisdom** for **decisions**, **perseverance** when the going gets **tough... //**
- I wonder whether you might make it an aim for **2021** – to get to know your **Bible** better... because as you **do** – you’ll grow ever **more** in both your **love** for our **Lord God** – and in your **trust** in **him...**
- I want **YOU** this morning – to recall the words of **Scripture** – from **Old** and **New** Testaments – around the theme of the **end** of the **world** and the **return** of our **Lord...**
- So here’s that first point:

1. SCOFFERS FORGET

- We can understand can’t we that people would **scoff** at the **claim** of Jesus’ **return**.
- v4 – *They will say, “Where IS this ‘coming’ he promised? Ever since our ancestors died, everything goes on as it has since the beginning of creation”.*
- Have you had people say something like this to you?
- Ha – I thought your **Jesus** was coming **back**?
- OR – where **is** this God of **yours**?
- Or maybe someone has scoffed at you saying – “how come he didn’t stop this catastrophe... why did he let **COVID-19** get out of **control**?”
- “Where **was** he when the bushfires were **raging**?”
- “Why didn’t he send rain when you first **asked** him instead of waiting years and years so we’d go **broke** and lose **hope**?”
- Plenty of people who **scoff** in one way or another at all that we **value** and **treasure** in our **relationship** with the **Lord...** from the **very existence** of **God** – to the cases of **abuse** in the **church** that we have had to **confront** in **recent years**.
- But **Peter** is so **up-front** about these **scoffers...**
- Note in **v3** what their **motivation** is... they are **following** their own **evil desires**. Scoff about God enough, and you believe your own rhetoric and then live as you please!
- Then see in v5 – *they deliberately forget... ///*
- That is – many have come from a position where they absolutely **know** the truth... about **God** – about **Jesus** – about his **love** – about how they should be **responding** to the riches of his **mercy** – but they **deliberately forget... BECAUSE** they want to live life following their own **evil desires...** they **deliberately forget...** all they’ve **learnt** and **known...** that lets them off the **hook //** or so they think!
- Like Paul saying in Romans 1 – that they **suppress** the **truth about God...** and... that their thinking became **futile** and their **foolish hearts** were **darkened...**

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- Here in 2 Peter 3 – have a look with me at v5 - we read **specifically** that they deliberately **forget** that *long ago by God's word the heavens came into being and the earth was formed out of water and by water...* they **forget** God created the **world**...
- And then – they forget that **by** *these waters also the world of that time was deluged and destroyed...* that there was a **flood** – God's **judgement** on a rebellious **people**...
- And then – v7 they forget that *By the same word the present heavens and earth are reserved for fire, being kept for the day of judgement and destruction of the ungodly.*
- That's a **lot** to **forget**!
- **Creation /**
- **Flood /**
- And the **judgement** at the end of time ...! /
- But take note there – and make sure **YOU** remember that “the **present** heavens and earth are reserved for fire, being kept for the **day** of **judgement** and **destruction** of the **ungodly**”
- He enlarges on this in v10 – have a look – *the heavens will disappear with a roar; the elements will be destroyed by fire, and earth and everything done it will be laid bare.*
- Friends – **everything** we **see** here – is **temporary** – as a fire goes through a forest and after its been you can see **straight through** – so will there be a **fire** that lays bare **everything** ever **done** on the **earth**.
- A Day is coming... //
- And that Day will mean the **end** of the **heavens** and **earth** we now **inhabit**... /
- ...and we are **hushed** aren't we by the words... *and the **destruction** of the **ungodly** //*
- Those who have followed their **own** desires – and have **deliberately forgotten**... will get what their hearts have **longed** for... they've **wanted** to be rid of **God** out of their **lives**... and that is what will sadly **happen**... //
- **Scoffers forget**... //
- And there will be a **deadly consequence**... //
- So Peter comes back very strongly to us in v8 – and says:

2. **DON'T YOU FORGET**

- v8 – have a look with me – *but do not forget this one thing dear friends: with the Lord a day is like a thousand years, and a thousand years are like a day. The Lord is not slow in keeping his promise, as some understand slowness. Instead he is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance.*
- Are you tempted to wonder where Jesus' coming is as well?
- Don't **forget** he says, that God works on a very different time scale to us
- We are **in** time
- He is **out** of time
- He is in **eternity**.
- God's timing is entirely **different** from ours. One day is like a **thousand years**... a thousand **years** are like a **day**....

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- But the point is **this** – its now been around 2000 **years** since Jesus left – but for the God of **eternity** – the God who operates **out** of our sphere of time and space – that is not a **long time**
- but why any '**delay**' anyway?
- this is **SO** precious
- he is giving **more** and more **people**, more and more time to repent... (v9)
- so although we just learnt that when the end comes it will mean the **destruction** of the **ungodly**...
- ...**here** we learn that God is incredibly **patient** with those who **deliberately forget** – he's **giving** them time to **remember** – time to **turn** from following their **own evil desires**...
- ...every **day**, every **week**, every **year** longer until Jesus **returns**, is **more opportunity** for your **friends**, your **family**, to come to **Christ**...
- isn't this a **lovely picture**?
- There is an **amnesty** on at present – anyone who repents **now** can find **forgiveness** and eternal life...
- the Lord is **patiently waiting** for more and more to take up his **kind** and **gracious offer**...
- So yes – he **will** come back - like a **thief** in the **night** – as we learnt last week - **unexpected, unpredictable** but **unmistakable**...
- but in the **mean** time... **until** that Day **comes**...
-the God who doesn't want anyone to **perish**... is **holding off** that day... because he's giving more **opportunity** for **everyone** to come to **repentance**...
- How **wonderful!!** //
- There may be some watching **today** who have been **scoffing**...
- You've thought to yourself – may be commented to someone else – "where **is** this **Jesus**?"
- Ah – he's **never** coming **back**!
- And because you had concluded that, you've been **following** your **own evil desires**...
- And you've been deliberately **forgetting** that God said there'd be a **flood** and there **was**...
- ...and he said Jesus is **coming back**... and he **will**!!
- And you've been putting God and Jesus **out** of your **mind** – **away** from your **heart**... **content** to go it **alone**...
/
- But just now, you heard me say... that the Lord is **patient**... not wanting any one to **perish** but everyone to come to **repentance**...
- And perhaps it is, that you realise what you've been **deliberately forgetting**... putting out of your mind – you actually know in your heart of hearts is **true**...
- And you've actually **missed** it... **missed God** in your **life**...
- Perhaps if you're **honest**, you're **tired** of doing life **without** him... **managing** on your **own**...
- And if he's **patient** and wanting people to come to **repentance**...
- ...then perhaps it is **today** – that you want to take him **up** on the **offer**....
- Wouldn't that be a wonderful **thing**...?

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- And **today's** the day to do it... because we don't know **when** he's coming **back** and when the amnesty as it were will be **over**...!
- Will you come back **today**?
- All you need to do is say '**sorry**'... **sorry** for following your **own** evil **desires**... **sorry** for **deliberately forgetting**... "**please** forgive me..."
- And if you do that... on the basis of Jesus' **life, death** and **resurrection**... you will be **completely forgiven**...
- ...and when Jesus comes... instead of saying '**I don't know you**', he'll say – '**come** – welcome into my eternal home...' ////
- Two points... **scoffers forget**... and Don't **YOU** forget...
- Any **scoffers** watching? **Scoff** no more, and **return** to the **Lord** your **God**...
- And as for everyone **else** – don't **YOU** forget... the Lord is not **slow** in keeping his promise of his **return**... but just giving **more** and **more people** time to come **back** to **him**...
- **Praise Him** for his **grace** and **mercy**... and do all **you** can to encourage **scoffers, back** to **him**!