

Marks of Preparation



How to Live in a World Falling Apart (Part 4)
by Derek Prince

There is a hunger in the heart of multitudes of people for purity. You find it in all sorts of places. You find it amongst prostitutes, amongst prisoners, amongst alcoholics, among hard-boiled businessmen. Somewhere deep down there is a longing for purity. We can tell people the way to purity, it's to give your life unreservedly to Jesus Christ. He will purify you and you will purify yourself.

Now in closing this message let's give you seven marks of preparation. If you have your Bible open at 1 John chapter 3, if you have it open there you've just got to turn back one page to 2 Peter chapter 3 which deals with the coming of the Lord and the day of the Lord. We'll read from verse 11 through verse 14:

> "Therefore, since all these things [and that's the entire material universe] will be dissolved, what manner of person ought you to be, in holy conduct and godliness!"

Let me ask you that question, what kind of people ought you to be? And then he goes on:

> "Looking for and hastening the coming of the day of God—because of which the heavens will be dissolved, being on fire, and the elements will melt with fervent heat. Nevertheless, we, according to His promise, look for new heaven and a new earth in which righteousness dwells. Therefore, beloved, looking forward to these things be diligent to be found by Him in peace, without spot and blameless."

If you analyze that passage there are seven requirements in the life of a Christian who is truly looking forward to the coming of the Lord, and I'll give them to you briefly. It says in verse 11 "what manner of persons ought you to be, in holy conduct and godliness." So those are the first two requirements: holy conduct, holy living and godliness. My definition of godliness is that it's a temperament controlled by the Holy Spirit, a person whose reactions proceed from the Holy Spirit. You know, as a Christian what really tells us what you're like is not your actions, it's your reactions. Your actions you can premeditate but your reactions tell us what kind of

person you really are. Godliness reacts in the way the Holy Spirit would react. When a godly person walks into a room the presence of God walks in with them. So those are the first two requirements: holy conduct and godliness.

Then we go on in verse 12, two more requirements: looking for and hastening the coming of the day of God. Now, if you have the old authorized version it says hastening unto. The modern translations are more accurate and they're much more exciting. We're not hastening unto, we are hastening the coming of the day of God. So there are two more requirements. Number one, looking for. Keep your finger in 2 Peter, but if you want to turn, turn to Hebrews chapter 9:27–28, the last two verses of Hebrews chapter 9.

> "And as it is appointed for men to die once, but after this the judgment."

Now notice, dear friends, there are two appointments you'll never miss. You may miss every other appointment in life but those two appointments you'll keep. "To die and after that judgment."

> "So, Christ was offered once to bear the sins of many. To those who eagerly wait for Him He will appear a second time apart from sin for salvation."

To whom will He appear? To those who eagerly wait for Him. So let me ask you, are you eagerly waiting for the appearing of the Lord? It may be that God will have to let you go through some unpleasant experiences and wean you from the love of this world until you come to the conclusion in a very practical way that there's nothing really to look forward to but the coming of the Lord.

But, Jesus is not coming for church members, He's coming for those who are eagerly awaiting His appearance.

Now going back to 2 Peter chapter 3, looking for and hastening the coming of the day of God. That is a powerful thought, that we can hasten the coming of the day of God. We don't need to sit passively and just wait for it to happen, we can hasten its coming. I'll tell you one way, it's very plain to me and there may be other ways, but I live by this way. This is the basis of the ministry of Derek Prince Ministries, it's the motivation of Ruth and myself. It's found in Matthew 24:14:

> "And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in all the world as a witness to all the nations, and then the end will come."

So the end will not come until this gospel has been preached in all the world to all the nations.

So how can you hasten the coming of the day of God? That's right, you heard what Don said, get on with the job. I believe every true Christian has a responsibility to be involved in the preaching of the gospel in every nation in all the world. You can't all go, you can be involved in prayer, you can be involved in giving, you can be involved in other ways. But anyone who is not in any way involved in the preaching of the gospel of the kingdom to all nations is delaying the coming of the Lord. That's a fearful responsibility. Think of all the agony and the suffering in the world. And the longer we have to wait the greater will be the toll of human suffering. And we who have responsibility to hasten the coming of the day, if we do not do it, we'll be held accountable for the suffering that results from our laziness. And brothers and sisters, just search the Bible from beginning to end and see if you can find one good word about laziness. We wouldn't accept drunkards in most of our churches but the Bible is much kinder about drunkenness than it is about laziness. And how many lazy people do we tolerate in church? Week after week they sit there, they're respectable, they sing the hymns, they say "Amen." But, laziness is wickedness. And the responsibility for laziness rests on us who are lazy. We are delaying the coming of the kingdom of God.

Going on, we've got three more requirements and they're found in verse 14 of 2 Peter chapter 3.

> "Therefore, beloved, looking forward to these things be diligent to be found by Him in peace, without spot and blameless."

Those are the three final requirements. In peace. No ruptured relationships which you could mend in your family, in the church, even with your unsaved neighbors. Are you living, as far as lies in you, in peace? When Paul speaks about that he says keep peace with all men as far as lies in you. There are some situations which it's not our responsibility but God says as far as lies in you, let there be no broken relationships, let there be no unresolved resentments, bitterness.

So I want to ask you, how is it between you and your neighbors? You know what the second commandment is? Love your neighbor as yourself. And that really means your neighbor. It's not just a figure of speech. How are you getting on with the people you live closest to? How are you getting on with the people you work next to in the office or the factory? Because if you're preparing for the Lord's coming,

you have to do something about it.

Let me just list those seven requirements from 2 Peter.

Number one, holy conduct.

Number two, godliness.

Number three, looking for the coming of the Lord.

Number four, hastening the coming of the Lord.

Number five, in peace.

Number six, without spot.

And number seven, blameless.

Let me just comment on the last two. I've commented on in peace. Without spot, what does that mean? Jesus was the Lamb of God without blemish and without spot. I understand that to mean He was without personal original sin. He also was without any sin that He ever committed. That was a spot. And any sin you've committed and have not repented of and confessed is a spot on your life. The Word of God says you have to be without spot. You have to keep short accounts with God. Never go to sleep with unconfessed sin in your life. Who knows if you'll wake up? It might be your last night on earth.

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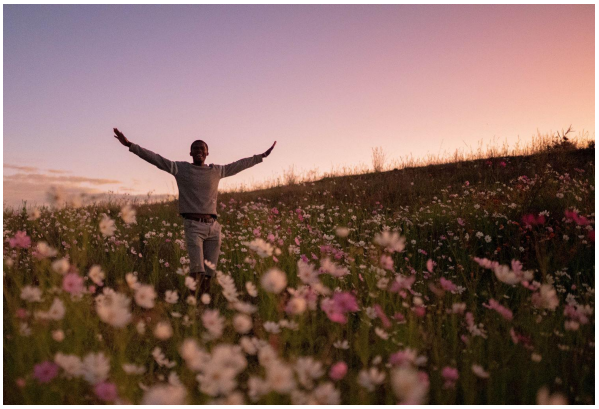

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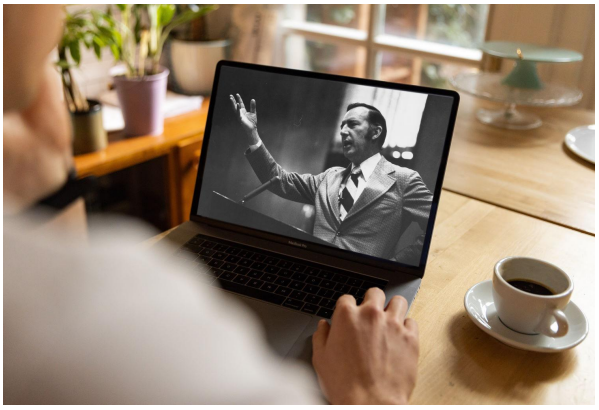

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