The Speeding of the Last Day

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Preacher: William Philip

[0:00] We're going to turn now to our reading this morning, and Willie is continuing a series through 2 Peter, which has been leading us through on Sunday evenings.

! And now this morning we're going to be back in 2 Peter chapter 3, so please turn with me to page 1019 if you have the visitor Bible.
2 Peter chapter 3, and we'll begin there at verse 1. 3 Peter chapter 3, and we'll begin there at verse 1.
In the last days, with scoffing, following their own sinful desires, they will say, where is the promise of his coming? 4 For ever since the fathers fell asleep, all things are continuing as they were from the beginning of creation.
5 For they deliberately overlook this fact, that the heavens existed long ago, and the earth was formed out of water, and through water by the word of God.
[1:30] 6 And that by means of these, the world that then existed was deluged with water and perished. 7 But by the same word, the heavens and earth that now exist are stored up for fire, being kept until the day of judgment and destruction of the ungodly.

7 But do not overlook this one fact, beloved, that with the Lord, one day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years is one day. 8 The Lord is not slow to fulfill his promise, as some count slowness, but is patient towards you, not wishing that any should perish, but that all should reach repentance.
9 But the day of the Lord will come like a thief, and then the heavens will pass away with a roar, and the heavenly bodies will be burned up and dissolved, and the earth and the works that are done on it will be exposed.
9 Since all these things are thus to be dissolved, what sort of people ought you to be in lives of holiness and godliness, waiting for and hastening the coming of the day of God, because of which the heavens will be set on fire and dissolved, and the heavenly bodies will melt as they burn.
But according to his promise, we are waiting for new heavens, and a new earth in which righteousness dwells. 10 Therefore, beloved, since you are waiting for these, be diligent, to be found by him without spot or blemish, and at peace.
[3:09] And count the patience of our Lord as salvation, just as our beloved brother Paul also wrote to you, according to the wisdom given him, as he does in all his letters, when he speaks in them of these matters.

There are some things, and then that are hard to understand, which the ignorance and unstable twist to their own destruction, as they do the other scriptures.
You, therefore, beloved, knowing this beforehand, take care that you are not carried away with the error of lawless people and lose your own stability, but grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.
To him be the glory, both now and to the day of eternity. Amen. Well, may God bless his word to us this morning.
Well, if you'd turn with me to Peter's second letter, and we're looking at chapter 3, as Paul read to us.
[4:13] For the last few Sunday evenings, we've been looking at this second letter of Peter. And this morning and next week, we're going to conclude our study, which has been focused particularly on chapter 3, but with an anchor there, really, we've been seeking to keep in mind the whole message of Peter throughout this short letter.

And if ever a letter was deeply relevant for the church in the Western world today, then surely it's this one. Well, I suppose we do tend to find, don't we, that wherever we open the Bible and begin to read and study it, we think it's the most relevant thing for our world today, don't we?

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And of course, that's because that is the nature of God's word. Peter, in his first letter, tells us that God's word is alive. It's living and abiding, he says.
That's the phrase he uses, isn't it, in 1 Peter 1, verse 23. And he says that it's by this living word that we are born again into a living hope. God's word brings us from death to life to new creation.
And it's by the same word that, here in 2 Peter, he tells us that God's divine power has been given to us.
[5:40] It's been granted to us, he says in chapter 1, so that we will have everything that we need to live in this world. Everything we need, he says, for life and for godliness.

Everything we need, every single day until the Lord Jesus returns, as he's promised to do. Or, indeed, as he calls each one of us individually home.
It's through this living word, with all the great and precious promises that it contains, that Peter says we, as frail human beings, as creatures of the dust as we are, that we should become, he says, partakers of the divine nature.
Actually, just look back to chapter 1 and verses 3 and 4, because it is an utterly astounding promise, isn't it, that he makes there. Chapter 1, verse 3.
God's divine power has granted to us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of him who called us to his own glory and excellence.
[6:51] Isn't that astonishing? Called us to his own glory and excellence, by which he has granted to us his precious and very great promises, so that through them you may become partakers of the divine nature.

Partakers of the divine nature. Isn't that staggering? That by God's sheer grace, by his mercy, we will share in his own glory, his own glory and excellence.
That which is going to be revealed at the revelation of Jesus Christ, as he calls it in his first letter, or as he uses repeatedly through this letter, on the day of the Lord.
The day of the Lord, which Peter says will usher in a new heavens and a new earth. The word of power that brings us to life from the dead and that leads us to glory.
Isn't that amazing? And so, obviously, Peter is very concerned that the church should cherish this word of truth, this word of power that can do such things.
[7:59] And yet, the astonishing thing, the shocking thing, is that right from the very beginning, and all the way through, right to the present day, Peter says there have been those, and there will be those, in the church, not just outside the church, but inside the church who have not cherished that truth.

But rather, as he says, if you look at chapter 3, verse 16, just towards the end there, have despised God's truth, and therefore twisted the scriptures.
These wonderful promises that can bring us to glory, to share God's glory, to share the divine nature itself. But I've twisted that, not only to their own destruction, he says, but look at verse 17, carrying others away also into great error, into instability.
That is shocking, isn't it? And yet, it's true, and it's something that I think is increasingly obvious, in a very public way, in the churches, in our Western world in particular today, including, alas, our own national churches here in this country, in Scotland and in England, and indeed, sadly, in most of the established and historic denominations.
And the twin telltale signs that Peter speaks about here in this letter, are just as evident today. Look at verses 4 and 5 of chapter 3 here.
[9:38] What is the hallmark of those who twist things in that way? Well, they deny the authority of God's word. Verse 4, where is the promise of his coming? You can't believe what the Bible says, and what the Bible promises.

You can't make the scriptures your be-all and end-all today, in our modern world, where we know so much more. Where are these things that these ancient scriptures promise?
They deny the authority of God's word. And secondly, they deny, verse 5, the reality of God's wrath. That's Peter's point there. They overlook deliberately the fact of what?
Of God's judgment. Of God's judgment in history, and therefore, of his promised ultimate judgment. But the truth, verse 10, is that the day of the Lord will surely come.
It will come like a thief, suddenly. And everything in this whole world, says Peter, will be exposed in a searing judgment of fire. Now, that is what was being challenged, even in Peter's day, just a few decades after the resurrection of our Lord Jesus.

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[10:54] And we are very familiar, aren't we, with that kind of unbelief, that kind of rejection of the truth, very much within the professing church today. The voices of scoffers are very loud, and they're very persistent.

And God's voice may, in many churches, be almost drowned out. But God's voice is still here. And even if it's apparently quiet and drowned out by scoffing of our contemporary world, and even our contemporary church, it can be heard, and it must be heard. And so, what God's word says to every scoffer like that, every disbeliever, is that you are making a colossal error if you are a scoffer. Verse 10 here is as true as any other thing in the Bible is true. It echoes, we were saying this last week, it echoes the words of the Lord Jesus himself many, many times.
And you will be found to be a fool, an absolute fool, if you fail to pay heed to this. That day is coming. It's a day, says Peter in verse 10, of exposure.
[12:09] Everything will be revealed. Everything will be exposed. And therefore, it is a day that you cannot afford not to be ready for. But here's the question then, how?

How are we to make ourselves ready for that day? And that is the question today. It's there in verse 11. Since all these things are to be thus dissolved, what sort of people ought you to be?
The NIV puts a question mark at the end of that statement, then begins a new sentence, which I think is probably better. The ESV here just continues in a sentence.
But it's very clear that that is a question. What sort of people ought we to be? How are we to react as Christian people? Both to the reality of what God tells us about the future of this world and to the denials of that by scoffers both inside and outside the church.
How are we to respond? Well, not by panicking, either about the truth of God's coming judgment or about the error indeed of the scoffers.
[13:19] It's easy, isn't it, to be depressed by the state of the church. Goodness, I can remember how depressed I used to be back in our days when we were inside the national church.

You used to have to go to presbytery meetings and read papers that were utterly depressing. It was nothing but decline and misery and corruption. But God does not want us to panic.
It's easy to panic. Whenever you read anything in the newspaper or you see anything in the news about churchmen in this country saying something, it makes me depressed. But Peter says, no, we're not to panic.
We're not to be depressed. Nor are we to respond certainly by pandering to that kind of teaching and just giving up on the truth. There's a naivety among some people in the church who feel that, well, if we just keep on dialoguing with those who are teaching falsehood and taking the church in the wrong direction, if we just keep on dialoguing, then perhaps in the end we'll win.
But the only way that you get by dialogue is death by dialogue. That is a strategy of those who want to corrupt the church, to lead people into folly, to exhaust those who stand for the truth until eventually they can't respond anymore.
[14:40] That actually is pondering to false teaching. But no, in contrast to these wrong reactions, Peter lays out for us here in these verses, I think, three very clear things that we are to do in response to the reality of being in a way.

We are to do a church that is facing corruption in these last days, as Peter says we will. And every one of the things he tells us to do is very active. It's not passive at all. And that's so important, isn't it, for us to get clear.
Because God's Word tells us very clearly about the future. God has planned the future. God has set out a pattern for the future. God is utterly sovereign.
And what God has purposed will surely and certainly come to pass. But our response to that clarity about the sovereignty of God is never, ever to be, well, God will sort it out, so we just remain passive.
We just keep our heads down. We just pray and we just wait to see what God does. No, that is never, ever the response in the Bible to the clear teaching about the sovereignty of God.
[15:45] The response is always one of activity in relation to God's sovereignty. And that's very, very clear here. When the question is asked in verse 11, what kind of people ought you to be?

Peter gives us the answer in three clear things. First of all, he says we are to be people of active purity. Active purity, verse 11.
Living lives of holiness and godliness. And that is a vital thing for the church. Holiness is vital.

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The New Testament teaches that repeatedly. But it also tells us, doesn't it, very plainly, that that won't come by default. Which is why Peter says here we need diligence in pursuing lives of holiness and godliness.
Look at Peter's logic. Verse 11. Verse 11. Since this sinful world is being dissolved and will be judged. And look at verse 14.
[16:45] Since, again, since you are waiting for these things. That is, verse 13, the new heavens and the new earth in which righteousness dwells. Since these things, then, verse 14, be diligent, he says, to be found in him without spot or blemish and at peace.

Do you see what he's saying? The new world, the new heavens and earth, is a place where there can be no spot or blemish. There can be no imperfection there.
There can be no sin and corruption there. So, if you are people who are called for that future, then we must be becoming people fit for that environment.
Well, that stands to reason, doesn't it? Any sane person, if you're going to emigrate to another country, you'll prepare for that future, won't you? You'll start to learn the language.
You'll start to research the culture. You'll need to learn about how things work there. You move there. How do you rent a house? How do you buy a house? You need to understand the laws. You need to understand the climate and what the right sort of clothing will be and all of these things, don't you?
[17:56] Well, we are waiting for a new home. And it's the home, says Peter, of righteousness. It's marked by holiness. It's marked by godliness.

It's marked by peace. It's not marked by spot and blemish and sin and filth. And since that is so, says Peter, well, we are to live actively countercultural lives now without spot or blemish.
Not allowing ourselves to become admired in the muck and in the filth of all of this world's destructive thinking and destructive behavior. Notice those words, without spot or blemish.
Look back to chapter 2, verse 13 and 14. And what do you see? See what he says about those who are spreading spiritual falsehood in the church.
What are they, verse 13? They are blots and blemishes reveling in their deceptions while they feast with you. That is, they claim to share the same cup with you.
[19:05] They claim to be in communion with you. The genuine cup of Christ. But look at the reality, verse 14. They have eyes full of adultery, insatiable for sin.

They entice unsteady souls. They have hearts trained for greed. They are accursed children. And what Peter is saying, no, no, no, you are to be the very opposite of that.
People of active purity. Without spot or blemish. But you know that that must be active, don't you? Because that's not going to happen by default.
If all around us in the air that we breathe and the culture that we live in is talk of sexual gratification. It's very hard, isn't it? To not become so used to that that you hardly notice it.
You just accept it. That you follow it. It used to be just what he used to call top shelf men's magazines. But that is now in every magazine, isn't it?
[20:12] Women's magazines too. Even children's things. The sort of things that children are being taught about in schools. We live in a culture that is obsessed by sexuality and sensuality.

And Peter talks here about being trained in greed. Not just naturally greedy, but trained in greed. Goodness me. We hardly need that, do we? But that's also the case in our culture today. And we're reaping the rewards of that big time.
Our whole Western world economy is based on consumption. And largely on consumption of things that we can't afford and we haven't yet earned.
Borrowing from the future. Living beyond our means. I read this week that the national debt of the United Kingdom is now three trillion dollars.
[21:09] Three trillion pounds, in fact. It's hard to even compute what that means. But I read that if you spend a million pounds every single day since the day that Jesus was born, we still wouldn't yet have spent a trillion pounds.

Isn't that extraordinary? And yet we in this country have spent that money on consuming things already. It will take us 10,000 years of spending a million pounds a day to recoup that money.
Trained in greed. The whole economy is based upon training us to be greedy. To have more things and want more things than in a thousand lifetimes we could ever earn.

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And notice in chapter 2 verse 14 here. Notice how when these values infect the church, it's so easy that it spreads in such a damaging way.
They entice unsteady souls. Look down to verse 18 of chapter 2. They entice by sensual passions of the flesh.
[22:24] Those who are barely escaping from those who live in error. The vulnerable, the weak, the new Christians, the young Christians, who are not yet solid in faith, who are not yet taught how to live for Christ.

Enticed and led away by those who claim to be sharing the same cup, the same feast. We're all Christians. We're leaders like you. We share communion with you. But actually, being enticed to something very different.
It's reprehensible, isn't it? When leaders in churches find someone who's struggling to escape from the life of sin that they've been rescued from.
And instead of encouraging them to battle on with Christ's help. Instead of that true word of Christian encouragement, they say to them, Oh, don't struggle.
It's who you are. We affirm you as you are. You don't need to repent. Don't listen to people who say that. This isn't really sin at all. It's just you and your identity.
[23:29] That's like somebody saying to an alcoholic who's managed to be dry for many years, Oh, go on, just have a few. That won't harm you. And you see what Peter is saying to us here is, We're all hardwired for sin, aren't we?

We're hardwired for sensuality. And if you live in a muddy field, you're going to get splashed and spattered with filth very easily, aren't you?
Unless you're very diligent to protect yourself. So look at chapter 3, verse 14 again.
That's what he says, isn't it? Be diligent to be found in him without spot and blemish. Be people of active purity.
That means knowing your own weaknesses, especially, and determining not to be enticed by them. That's why you have a filter on your internet if you're wise.
[24:43] Because by nature, you'll be drawn to things that are wrong and they're going to harm you. You need to stop that happening. That's why if you're wise in your stewardship of your giving to the Lord's work, you'll make sure that you have a clear plan and a system to do that so it doesn't get forgotten about, so you don't end up, as Malachi says, robbing God.

I'm very thankful that in my very first couple of weeks as a student in Aberdeen, a friend who was in the year above me, actually Hannah Moore's father, David Moore, said to me, have you sorted out your giving to the Lord yet?
And I said, well, what do you mean? And he said, well, what you need to do is set up a separate bank account. And at the beginning of every term, when you get your money or your loan or whatever it is, you give that money to the Lord and you put it in that bank account.
I said, why do I need to do that? And he said, well, otherwise you'll just be tempted to spend it. And that's what I did, and I did it ever since. And I'm very glad I do, because otherwise I'd be tempted to spend the Lord's money.
There's so many things, aren't there, in which if we know our weaknesses and want to be active for serving the Lord, we'll put things in place that will mitigate our weaknesses and help us to be actively living the way the Lord wants us to live.
[26:04] Be diligent, says Peter, to be found without spot or without blemish. Be people of active purity. And then secondly, if you look at verses 12 to 14 again, he's teaching us here to be people of active patience.

Active patience. And his point here is that mission will not happen by default either. So we need to be active, he says, in proclaiming the gospel.
Three times, you notice in verses 12 to 14, three times the word waiting appears. Verse 12, waiting and hastening the coming day. And verse 13, waiting for a new heavens and a new earth.
And then verse 14, waiting for these. That is, we're to be people of patience, patiently waiting, not impatience.
Again, that's very, very important, isn't it? Because impatience among Christians is the root of so many follies, so many problems. Impatiently wanting full salvation now.
[27:18] But no, here's three times in three verses, Peter's telling us we're to be waiting for that. It's not yet. It's in the future still. That, of course, is what the gospel of liberalism forgets.

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Thinks that this world can be transformed without a recreation, without the new heavens and the new earth that Peter promises here. But it can be done now. And that if only governments did this or that or the next thing, if only Christians did this or that or march more or protested more or picketed more or whatever it was to get things changed, we would at last have the kingdom of God here on earth.
How many Christian organizations, Christian missions, have lost their way completely in the gospel by thinking that the goal of the Christian church is to make the world now a bit of a better place and forgetting that the goal of the gospel is the new heavens and the new earth.
And at best, that idea of creating some sort of heaven here on earth now, at best, it's just a fantasy that leads to great disappointment.
But at worst, well, that is the very thing, isn't it, that leads to terrible totalitarianism. That was the dream of communism. That's the dream of fascism.
[28:33] Promised that. Heaven on earth. But ended in absolute horror. But it's not just that kind of leftist Marxist theology that promises that.

Many Pentecostal theologies are just as problematic and mistaken in a different way because they want health now. They want wealth now. They want prosperity now. Many parts of the world the church is blighted with a prosperity gospel that is focused on the here and now.
No waiting, but wanting. And again, that is false. It leads only to self-deception and in the end to real despair.
No, that is wrong. We're to wait for that, says Peter. That comes only in the great regeneration to come, the regeneration of the whole world, the whole cosmos when Jesus comes.
And only then, in just the same way, only then will all our struggles be behind us. Whatever those particular personal struggles are that are worst for us.
[29:40] But in the meantime, the Bible tells us the evidence of real faith is the battle continues, that we're in a battle against sin. I always like to say the very first description of a believer in the Bible is in Genesis 3.15 when God says, I will put enmity, struggle, between you and the serpent.

If there's no struggle in your life against the serpent and against sin, then one has to really doubt whether you actually know anything about the Christian faith at all.
Because by definition in the Bible, a person of faith is one who's struggling for the Lord and His way and against the evil one. So we're to be patient, but not passively so, actively so.
Look at verse 12, of waiting for and hastening that day. Hastening that day, but how do we do that? Well, look at verse 15.
Count the patience of the Lord as salvation. That is, grasp what this waiting is all for. It's for what Peter was talking about back in verse 9.
[30:53] Do you remember? God's patience is about salvation. He doesn't wish that anyone should perish, but that all should come to repentance.

God's patience is for mission of the gospel. And Peter goes on to say here in verse 15, it's not just him that's saying, this is what Paul's always talking about.
I suspect he probably has in mind particularly Paul's letter to the Romans. And in particular, where he talks there in chapters 9 to 11 about the great mystery and the great pain in Paul's life of the rejection of most of his countrymen, most of the Jews of the gospel of Jesus Christ.
And yet, what does he say? That rejection means salvation for the Gentiles, the gospel going into the whole world. Paul is constantly saying that this is the day of salvation.
salvation. And what encouragement that is, even in dark days and perplexing days, in days that we can't fathom, just like Paul who couldn't fathom the rejection of his own people, of their own Messiah.
[32:03] But it means this is a day of salvation still. And we have a part to play in that. You see, if we long for these things that we're to be patient for, if we long for peace, for justice the world over, for the end of wars, for the end of cruelty, the end of poverty, all these things, if we long for health and for healing for our loved ones, if we long for true prosperity for all, if we long for the end of the struggle with sin, the end of death as such a blight on this world, then Peter says, speed its coming by seeing why Jesus delays.

He's patient for the sake of salvation. He has a program of wonderful world gospel mission that must be fulfilled before He comes. And we are part of that, is what He's saying.

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And we're to see that. We're to play our part. We're to be a people of active patience. In other words, we're to be a people devoted to gospel mission. And again, that's not something that's going to happen by default, is it?
By sitting passively with our arms folded and waiting for God to do something. Just as we're not going to become people who live lives of no spot and no blemish, lives of holiness by accident or by default.
Of course not. Count the patience of the Lord as salvation, verse 15. That is, be people of active patience. Seize the day of mission.
[33:38] Hasten the day of the Lord's coming. No matter what's going on in the church, He's saying, whatever the false teaching might be, whatever the awful things that we might see that depress us about the Christian church in our part of the world, whatever is going on, the chief focus, says Peter, is to be the same.

Active, wholehearted zeal for the saving gospel of Jesus. And active zeal for living out the life of Christian faith and of witness.
And then thirdly, you see, in verse 18, He's saying to us we're to be people of active progress. Maturity as Christians, that also won't come by default, will it?
Look at verse 18. Grow, grow in the grace and knowledge of our God and Jesus Christ, our Savior. Well, how's that going to happen? Well, you remember back in chapter 1, verse 5 and following what He said, He says, if you grow in godliness, well, you'll grow in godliness if you add to your faith virtue and self-control and affection and so on, then you will grow in the knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ.
It's quite simple, really. If you live nearer to Him day by day, you will grow to know Him better and better. I mean, that's obvious, isn't it? Before I moved to Glasgow, I knew some of the people in this church.
[35:16] I'd met them at conferences and things and so on. Then I met them as I was being considered to become the minister here at various meetings and so on.

But when I came and lived here near to them and saw them all the time and spoke to them, some of you, well, I got to know you better and better. I know you a whole lot better after 22 years than I did then.
It's obvious. And the way you get to know someone is you get to know them through their words, don't you? That's what fosters a relationship. You talk to them.
They talk to you. You get to know how they think. You get to know what they like and what they dislike. You get to know what they cherish. You get to know what they think is important. And as you get to know more and more of these things, you get to know them more and more because they're revealing themselves to you.
That's how relationship works, isn't it? In a marriage partnership, that's how the relationship grows. You talk to one another. You find out more. You live together. You learn. And that's what Peter is saying here about the Lord.
[36:28] He says in chapter 1 that he's given us his words. He's given us his great and precious promises. And that that is all that we need to know in the knowledge of him, to grow in the knowledge of him.

And so here again at the end of the letter in chapter 3 verse 16, you see he's speaking again of the scriptures so that we will grow in the knowledge of our God and Savior as verse 18 says here.
Of course, there is more to knowing the Lord than just knowing the Bible. But there's not less to knowing the Lord than knowing the Bible, his word.
It's true, you can be an expert in the Bible and not know Jesus Christ at all. But it's also true that you cannot possibly know Jesus Christ deeply if you don't know your Bible deeply and well.
He says you can never come to know a person deeply. You've never ever listened to any word that they ever say to you because that's how they make themselves known to you.
[37:32] And that is very, very important indeed because it means that if a person doesn't know the Bible, it means if a home and a family doesn't cherish the Bible, if a church doesn't cherish the Bible, doesn't open the Bible frequently and often teach the Bible, make the word of God known, then Christ will not be well known in that church or in that home or in that family.

And that church or that home or that family will not grow in the grace and the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. People will not be progressing to maturity in Christ.

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And that's not what God wants. And so Peter says we must be people of active progress, growing daily. Despite all these things, growing daily in the grace and the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.
So friends, we're waiting, aren't we? Says Peter, for a new heavens and a new earth. We're waiting for the home of righteousness. We're waiting for the place where we truly belong forever to share in the glory of our God himself.
That's where we're going. That's where we've been called to. That's our destination. That's our true identity. The new heavens and the new earth.
[39:05] And as William Still once said, God doesn't want a heaven filled with spiritual pygmies. He doesn't. He wants grown-ups. He wants his heaven to be full of mature, fruitful believers.

So Peter says, since that is so, what kind of people ought we to be now and until that day? Well, he says, we're to be people active in purity, striving now to be without spot or blemish.
We're to be active in patience, striving now to proclaim the great day of salvation while it is still day.
And we're to be people above all active in progress, striving to know our Lord and Savior more and more, to reflect His glory and grace in our lives, the glory and grace that we've been called to share.
And that's how we're to spend the last day, says Peter, but that is how we will speed the last day.
And His message is very clear because He's writing to the whole church.
And it's this, that we can't do it without one another. We need each other to spur one another on in this life of gospel growth, don't we? Every one of the yous in this passage we've been reading, every one of those yous is a plural.
[40:35] So it's all together or it's none of us. And that's why the New Testament is full of language about life together, about God's household meeting together, about meeting together regularly, as Hebrews says, and more and more, not less and less as we see that day approaching, not giving up meeting together.

And Peter's message is just the same here, you see. You can't be a lone Christian. The more you gather with Christ's people around His Word, the more you will grow in the grace and the knowledge of our God and Savior.
The less you do that, the less you'll grow. In fact, you won't grow at all. You won't even just stagnate.
Peter says in chapter 1, verse 8, we're to stop ourselves becoming ineffective and unfruitful. That's what happens if we're not part of the fellowship helping one another.
So let me end just by reading verses 10 and 11 again of chapter 1. Here's Peter's call to all of us together. Therefore, brothers and sisters, be all the more diligent to make your calling and election sure.
[41:58] For if you practice these qualities, you will never fall. For in this way, there will be richly provided for you an entrance into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

Amen. Let's pray together. Lord, as we wait for and long for the great day of your coming and the revelation of our true home, the home of righteousness, would you help us today and every day until that day to help one another to be a people active in purity, active in patience, and active in progress, a people proclaiming the gospel of Christ to this world until that day, and a people every day striving to know our Lord and Savior more and more to reflect His glory and grace in our lives.
Lord, help us, we pray, but thank You that we have this great calling and therefore we know that You will hear us and answer our prayers when we pray to that end to help us to spur one another on for the glory of Christ and for the growth of His church here.
Amen.

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