

Living for Eternity

by Phil Beach Jr.

Phil Beach Jr. emphasizes the urgency of living a life focused on eternity and being spiritually prepared for the return of Christ.

Duration: 45:15

Scripture: 2 Peter 3:8

Topics: "Eternity", "Spiritual Vigilance"

Description

Phil Beach Jr. emphasizes the importance of living for eternity, urging believers to remain vigilant and spiritually awake in light of the imminent return of Christ. He reflects on what Daniel might say to his loved ones, encouraging them to focus on repentance and holiness rather than the distractions of worldly life. Beach warns against the dangers of covetousness and the fleeting nature of earthly possessions, reminding the congregation that true life is found in being rich toward God. He calls for a life set apart for God's purposes, highlighting the urgency of being prepared for the coming day of the Lord. Ultimately, he challenges listeners to evaluate their lives and priorities in the context of eternity.

Transcript

I felt the Lord has put something on my heart today, so I'm going to share that, and I'm going to just look to the Lord for His help. Part of this is going to be the message that I'm going to be bringing to the guests and family members who are going to be attending the memorial service, as I prayed and asked the Lord, what would Dan say if Dan could come back to his family, just for one hour, and be a special speaker at the memorial service that they're holding for him? What do you think Dan would say, having been in the presence of the Lord now for several weeks? So, let's bow our hearts. Father, we thank You for the Lord Jesus Christ.

We thank You for His marvelous love and mercy and grace. And we stand in Your presence today, Lord, very needy. We're needy, Lord, because You are a great and mighty and awesome God, and You are worthy and deserving of all of our love and all of our affection and all of our devotion.

But oftentimes, Lord, we become distracted and blinded by the fleeting, passing, momentary affairs of this life. And we unknowingly fall asleep spiritually. And we need You, Lord, to wake us up.

We need You to stir us. We need You to speak life into our spirit and soul today and help us to hear Your heart, help us to hear Your Word, Lord, and help us to have the appropriate response before You today.

So we commit this Word into Your hands and pray that the Holy Spirit will use it to serve the purpose for which it is intended.

Beginning, if you would, open your Bibles to 2 Peter. 2 Peter. 2 Peter, and we're going to be reading in chapter 3, beginning in verse number 8. 2 Peter is an epistle where Peter speaks about warnings.

He speaks about the need to persevere in our faith. And he speaks particularly about the warning of the falling away that is to occur in the last days. 2 Peter 2 is filled with warnings about false teachers and false prophets who would come.

And they would deceive many people. They would be devoted to sin, to greed, to covetousness. And by their deceiving and subtle speech, they would lead astray many.

And so, Peter is warning us here, and as we look at verse number 8, we'll begin reading there. We're going to start there, and then we're going to go to the book of Luke. Now, he's contrasting in verse number 8 the difference between scoffers, which is found in verse number 3 of chapter 3. Scoffers who would mock and despise the promise that the Lord Jesus Christ was coming back again.

They would not only despise it, but they would live lives that proved that they did not believe it. So he's contrasting this group of people to verse number 8, but beloved, but you beloved, those who are possessing a heart that loves the Lord Jesus, but you beloved, be not ignorant of this one thing. And so Peter is telling us not to be ignorant.

Ignorance is a horrible vice that can work great damage and destruction in our lives if we're ignorant, if we lack the proper knowledge and understanding. So, right now, God is saying, don't be ignorant. He's saying to us, don't be ignorant.

Don't lack this knowledge. Don't lack this information. Remember it.

Remind yourself. We need to remind each other daily of this truth. Don't be ignorant of this one thing that one day is with the Lord as 1,000 years and 1,000 years as one day.

The Lord is not slack. That means to delay concerning His promise. As some men count slackness, but is longsuffering to usward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.

And so, Peter here is saying that though it appears like the Lord's promise is carrying, He is not delaying without purpose. And His purpose in delay is because He's not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance. And of course, this not only applies to the sinner, but it applies to the saints in the church.

Christ is not willing that any who are among those who claim His name, He's not willing that any should perish in sin. Perish living a life foolishly. Perish living a life distracted by the cares of this life, which is what we're going to see in a little while.

But that God is willing that all should come to repentance. God's will is that we would come to repentance. Now the word repent, as many of us know, it means to turn.

To turn in mind. To repent means to turn in mind. It means to cease from going in one direction and turn and go in the other direction.

The one direction we turn from is the direction of sin. The direction of self. Selfishness, particularly.

Selfishness. And we turn and follow after God's way. So, the Scripture says here, but the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night.

Now, the day of the Lord that Peter's referring to is a term that is used throughout the Old and New Testament. And it is a comprehensive term that includes the day of the Lord. It begins at the rapture of the church and includes the time period of tribulation, which is a time when judgment will come upon the nations and upon Israel.

This is the day of the Lord. It begins at the rapture, carries on through the tribulation, most likely seven years. It includes, at this time, the church is in heaven with Christ.

So the day of the Lord will include this seven-year period. Then the coming of the Lord again at His revelation, His second coming with the saints to set up a thousand-year kingdom on earth where He will reign in Jerusalem. Then after that period, there's going to be a short rebellion, which we won't go into now, but God is going to judge this rebellion.

And then after that, there's going to be a huge white throne judgment. And Christ is going to sit on that judgment seat and He's going to judge everyone whose name is not written in the book of life. And so if we do a thorough search of the Scriptures in the Old Testament and the New Testament, we will see the day of the Lord, the day of Christ, Jacob's trouble.

We will see that all of those Scriptures can include periods beginning with the rapture and ending at the great white throne judgment, Revelation 21-22. And so when Peter says the day of the Lord here, it's a comprehensive statement. But the purpose is not so much to define eschatologically how these events are going to happen and when they're going to happen and the circumstances that are going to be present, but it is demonstrating that in light of the fact that this great day of the Lord is going to be happening, he's contrasting that with the way we ought to be living our lives in light of this truth.

Don't be ignorant of this truth. The day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise. This is not fiction.

This is not fairy tale. This is not some crazy dream that Grisham or another great writer figured out to write down in order to make a great motion picture. This is reality.

A great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat. The earth and the works therein shall be burned up. Seeing then, seeing then, all these things shall be dissolved.

The word dissolve there means to loose. To loose cohesion. Everything is going to be loosed.

Everything is going to fall apart. Seeing these things shall be dissolved. What manner of persons ought we to be? How should we be living our lives as people that live here right before the great day of the Lord is about to come upon the world? Right before the great day of the Lord when the trump of God shall sound and Christ is going to meet those who come through judgment, those who come through visitation, those who come through in the church and are the living ones and remain, who come through judgment and don't perish.

He's going to meet those in the air. And so shall we ever be with the Lord. How shall we be living in light of these events that are about to come upon the world? It is not a day for partying.

It's not a day for rioting. It's not a day to be preoccupied with ourselves and our own self-interest. It's not a day to walk after the desires of the flesh, after the lusts of the heart, after the things the eyes want, after the ambitions of the soul.

It's not a day for that, beloved. What manner of persons ought we to be in holy conversation and godliness? Holy. We know what holy means.

We've talked about it many times. It means set apart. The word holy means set apart.

So our lives ought to be holy. That means our lives must be exclusively dedicated to the purpose of God. Everyone listen carefully.

Have you and do you every day of your life, every morning you wake up, before you get up out of bed, before you begin your day, do you make a conscious transaction with the Holy Spirit, with God Himself, and say, Today, Father, I don't know if this is my last day or not. I wonder if Dan woke up in the morning and said, Today's my last day. I'd better be careful.

I don't think he did. The likelihood is very slim. Do you agree? This might be your last day.

This might be my last day. What manner of persons are we living? How are we living? Number one, are we holy? Are we set apart? Are we devoting our lives to the Lord Jesus Christ, to the Lordship of Jesus Christ? Are we arising every morning saying, Father, amidst my day, amidst whatever I'm doing, Lord, I offer myself to You that I might be a vessel through whom the glory of Jesus Christ might be revealed. Holy conversation, behavior, way of life, and then godliness.

So you put it all together, it's a holy, set apart way of life that depicts, manifests, makes known godliness. And godliness is defined how? In the person of Jesus Christ. Godliness is defined by manifesting in our mortal bodies the moral majesty of Jesus Christ.

A life free from what? The love of money. A life free from covetousness. A life free from selfish ambitions.

A life free from following hard after my own thing. A life free from entanglements of this life. And so this is the warning that Peter brought to these Christians.

Now let's turn our Bibles please to Luke 21. Luke 21. Beginning in verse number 25.

Luke 21, verse 25. Here Jesus is speaking about and He's amplifying here the subject that Peter was referring to when He says the day of the Lord is about to come. Now Jesus is going to begin to show us some of the things that are going to be happening right before and into the day of the Lord.

Brothers and sisters, may the Holy Spirit Himself bear witness to the Word of God. May God put a holy passion in our hearts today. May God give us a heavenly vision of the day that we're living in.

I'm not going to set a date. I'm not going to say Jesus is coming next year or in three years or in five years. But I will say this, that it is closer now than it was yesterday and there is a lot of evidence circumstantially in the world that suggests that He's right at the door.

There are events that have taken place over the past 60 years that are unprecedented, that have never taken place since the beginning of the creation of man in Genesis. And most of these events were events that were predicted that would be present right at the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ. And so we put it together and we say, date, time? No.

Season? Yes. We look up and we see clouds coming and we say what? It's going to rain. Now, no one would say it's going to rain in 6 hours and 2 minutes and 13 seconds, but we can say it's going to rain shortly.

Let's get ready, right? Well, let's look at the signs. He's coming shortly. Let's get ready, beloved.

Let's be ready. Let's be ready. Luke 21, beginning in verse 25, and there shall be signs in the sun and in the moon and in the stars and upon the earth, distress of nations with perplexity, the seas and the waves roaring, signs in the sun and the moon and the stars.

Recently, I heard a theologian say that if you study astronomy, not astrology, but astronomy, you'll find that as far back as history goes, as far back as the science goes, there have been no significant signs that have occurred in the moon and the stars and the sun. Everything has been pretty much the way God has determined it. But he pointed out something very interesting that in this generation, there's been interesting signs in the heavens in that man has occupied the heavens.

He has gone to the moon. He has circled the earth. He's gone to Mars through a machine.

He's got spacecrafts traveling toward the outer limits of the universe. Signs in the heavens. Interesting point.

There's never been a time in the history of man where there were such unique signs in the earth and in the heavens and in the stars and in the moon than in the day that we live in now when man has gone up and he continues to go up. A sign of the last days? I believe it definitely is. Men's hearts shall fail then for looking after those things which are coming on the earth, for the powers of heaven shall be shaken.

And then shall you see the Son of Man coming in the cloud with power and great glory. And when these things begin to come to pass, then look up and lift up your heads, for your redemption draws nigh. Now verse 34, and take heed to yourselves.

Now this coincides with Peter's words, doesn't it? Take heed to yourself. In light of these soon-coming events, take heed. Beware.

Take heed to yourselves, lest at any time your hearts... Now what's the focus of this right now? Your heart. How we need to guard our heart. The Bible says that we need to guard our heart because out of it are the issues of life.

The heart is the very seed of who we are. And if the heart is filled with life and filled with the Word of God and filled with an ongoing vision of the Lord Jesus Christ, it will remain healthy. But if the heart becomes distracted, lest your heart be overcharged with surfeiting, surfeiting, drunkenness, the cares of this life in that day come upon you unaware.

So as a snare shall it come to all them that dwell on the face of the whole earth. Watch ye therefore and pray always. Watch and pray how often? Always, that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these

things and shall come to pass and to stand before the Son of Man.

The universe is about to experience unprecedented, never-before-seen-or-heard catastrophes, tribulation, trial, and activities. The earth, the Bible says in Isaiah, after having gone through these horrendous judgments that are coming from God as well as the wrath of the enemy, it uses a metaphor. It's going to row to and fro like a drunken man.

It's going to lose its equilibrium. The earth and the inhabitants therein are going to lose their ability to keep their balance. This is what's going to come upon the earth.

The earth is going to suffer sometime in the near future. The world will experience disasters and calamities as never before. Wars and conflicts of nations.

Verses 9 and 10. Significant, massive destruction and deception. Verse 8 of this chapter, 21.

Natural disasters and earthquakes. Famines and disease. Recently, I heard about in some parts of this country, a gallon of orange juice is now up over \$10 a gallon.

\$10 a gallon. Last night during a news broadcast, an economist said that it is not unlikely or unrealistic to anticipate in the not too distant future gas prices exceeding \$7 a gallon in this country. Those who are following the news know that the state of Iowa has been plunged into horrible, horrible flooding.

And over 20% of the crop, the corn and the soy crop, has been destroyed. In some countries, the price of wheat is equal to three months' wages. And they're rioting.

And they're engaging in all types of violence because they're starving and they can't afford to eat. Brothers and sisters, this is only the beginning. This is only the beginning.

It's going to happen. There's going to be a global famine. There's going to be a global economic crisis.

There's going to be a global catastrophe. And every single person, all nations and races and tongues will be affected during this coming upheaval. Persecution of believers will increase.

Verses 12-19. Attacks upon Israel. We've seen that, haven't we? This poor nation of Israel surrounded north-south, east-west, north-west, south-west, east-west, whichever direction you go, they're surrounded by enemies.

Enemies that hate them. What is it that the leader of Iraq vowed? What is his vow? That he will annihilate Israel from off the map. That's biblical prophecy being fulfilled right before us.

Ezekiel 36-39. The nations of the earth are going to rally together to take Israel off the map. How could that ever have been possible before 1948? Israel wasn't even a nation.

They weren't even a people. They were scattered throughout all the four corners of the earth until a sovereign God in heaven spoke and gathered them together. And in 67, they established the capital, Jerusalem, where Jesus is going to come back.

My God, we live in incredible days, brothers and sisters. How ought we to be living? Astronomical happenings. Verses 25-26.

Distress in nations. Distress in the multitudes, the seas of the people. Not only does that refer to oceanic disasters, but it also refers to the multitudes of people.

Distress of nations. Disturbances. Men's hearts failing for fear of what will be coming.

Jesus said to beware of surfeiting. This literally means to live in a lighthearted manner. In a lighthearted manner.

Silly. Privileged. In a giddy manner.

Medically, it referred to drunken nausea or headaches. It is a kind of lightheartedness and silliness and frivolousness and giddiness that comes from partying and drinking and indulging oneself in the cares of this life. It is loose living.

It is living asleep spiritually. It is being caught up in that which is temporal and losing sight of that which is eternal. It is grasping for that which the natural eye can see and failing to lay hold of that which only the spiritual eye can see.

What would Dan say to us if he was here today in this room sitting? And I said, Dan, what are your comments on this? After having been two, three, four weeks in the glory of God, I guarantee Dan would say one thing and one thing alone. Amen! Listen carefully to the Word of God. That's what he would say.

Because when we get to Heaven, beloved, God has nothing more to say than what He has already said. Did you know that? Did you know that God's not going to say anything else? He's just going to expound and make alive what He's already said. The prophets have spoken.

Number two, Jesus warns Takith that we not follow after surfeiting or drunkenness. The word comes from a word meaning wine. It means to be drunk with wine or any other strong drink.

And number three, He warned us about the cares of this life. This means to indulge one's cravings for more and more and more of the things of this world. Jesus said that one of the ways that the Word becomes unprofitable in our life, that is, it doesn't produce the full intention of God's heart, is because of the cares of this life.

The deceitfulness of riches and the desire of other things. We too often give our attention and our focus upon the things of this life to the neglect of giving our attention and focus on the things beyond this life. So, here we see some of the events that are going to be taking place that already now in miniature birth form are taking place all over the world.

Nations, countries, ethnic groups, warring, global concern about the problems that are escalating to only the beginning of sorrows. And so to bring this to a completion this morning, let's turn our Bibles to Luke. We're remaining in Luke 12.

Luke 12. And we're going to look at a familiar portion of Scripture. Luke 12, beginning in v. 13.

Luke 12, beginning in v. 13. And one of the company said unto Him, Master, speak to my brother that he divide the inheritance with me. And he said unto him, Man, who made me a judge or a divider over you? Interesting to note that the word man there is a very impersonal, almost cold, way to address someone.

Some of the writings that I read about this particular section of the Scripture suggest that this person probably knew the Lord. What they believed is that Jesus taught and rested, taught and rested. And those who knew Him usually were the ones that were able to get to Him during His times of resting.

And this was in between His teaching. If you go before this chapter, He's teaching. If you go after this chapter, He's teaching.

It's sort of the way it is in China. They go all day and they have little breaks. And then they teach.

And not everybody can get in and talk to the teachers. But generally, those who are hosting the teaching or if you know someone who is hosting and you ask them, you might be able to get in. That's how they have to work it.

Although, if not, then when you rest, there'd be hundreds of people there bothering you and you wouldn't be able to rest. And so the author suggested that Jesus, even though He may have known this man, He addressed him in a very impersonal and somewhat of a cold way. And the reason why this author said it and I agree with him, is because he recognized that this man was wanting Jesus to support something in him that wasn't right.

And Jesus refused to align Himself with it. And so this author says if you ever want a cold response from the Lord, go to Him and ask Him to bless something that He's already cursed. I thought that was good.

The Lord doesn't take sides with anyone except His Son and those who come to Him with brokenheartedness, acknowledging their need for Him. Man, who made Me judge or divide her over you? And He said to them, Take heed and beware of covetousness, for a man's life does not consist in the abundance of the things which he possesses. Now in order to drive this truth home, Jesus tells a parable.

Verses 16-21. So this parable is in direct response to His encounter with this young man. And He tells a parable.

And He spoke a parable saying, the ground of a certain rich man brought forth plentifully. And he thought within himself saying, what shall I do? Because I have no more room where to bestow my fruits. And He said, this will I do.

I will pull down My barns and build greater and there will I bestow all My fruits and My goods and I will say to My soul, Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years. Take thine ease. Eat, drink, and be merry.

But God said, thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee. Then who shall these things be which thou hast provided? So is He that lays up treasure for Himself, but is not rich toward God. Would Dan come down and say, read this.

Would Dan come down and say yes to this? I believe he would. And in this Scripture, Jesus is warning us about the snare of covetousness. Now listen closely.

We're going to connect the dots. We opened up with Peter. The day of the Lord is about to come.

All that to emphasize what kind of people ought we to be living. Set-apart, holy, way of life behavior. A set-apart behavior devoted to Christ's interests, reflecting godliness.

Reflecting those moral attributes, those moral qualities and characteristics that are representative and reflective of the Lord Jesus Christ. In this portion of Scripture, as well as in the one in Luke 21 that we read, Jesus is showing us exactly the kind of people we ought not to be. Beware of covetousness.

Beware of greed. You cannot and are not and will not live a set-apart way of life expressing godliness while at the same time ensnared by covetousness and greed. And here's the signs of covetousness and greed right from the Word of God.

First of all, Jesus said take heed. Beware. The warning was given and it was to be paid close attention to.

The word beware means to guard oneself from an enemy. And so Jesus used language in order to identify what covetousness really is. It is our enemy, not our friend.

We should resist covetousness and greed like we would an enemy. We should resist it. We should beware and fight against it.

The big sin of covetousness. And Jesus emphasized this sin of covetousness by telling a parable. And here's the interesting facts about the parable.

Listen carefully. In the parable, the phrase I is used six times and My is used five times. I and My.

I and My. The root and strength of covetousness is in the self-centered, self-assertive lifestyle that is governed by the I and My mentality. Notice the man assessing life approached it by saying I will do this, I will do that, I will do this six times and My soul, My life.

Greed and covetousness blinds us into believing that it is about Me and it is about My. The big mistake of this man was selfishness. Self-indulgence.

He thought only of himself. His lifestyle revolved around himself. He indulged himself.

And he became extravagant for who? Himself. I don't think the Lord would mind if we were extravagant for others. But God's heart is against extravagance for me.

He forgot that he lived in order to fulfill the purpose of God. And lastly, because he was ensnared by the sin of covetousness and greed, he became a fool because God said, this night, thy soul is required of Me. The word required there suggests a legal right.

It suggests a call required of thee, a call to give an account. Thy soul is required of thee. God's saying, you fool, tonight, your soul must be made manifest before Me.

Your soul must be exposed before Me and it must give an account of how it lived in this world. And you're not ready. You're a fool.

Why was he a fool? Verse 21, So is he that lays up treasure for who? Himself. He is a fool because he lived his life laying up treasure for himself and he was not rich toward God. And so, beloved, in light of this truth from God's Word this morning, the question we must ask ourselves is this, are we playing the fool? Or are we seeking to earnestly live before the Lord, wholly set apart lives in all of our behavior, demonstrating the godliness and moral character of Jesus Christ? The world is on the verge of judgment.

The church is going to be shaken before the day of rapture. God will visit His church, Ezekiel, Jeremiah, 1 Peter, and this visitation will be a time when God is going to purge His house so that the moral perfections of Jesus Christ, the incorruptible life of Christ might have ascendancy and preeminence. And out of that judgment, a people will come ready to meet the Lord.

And so, in light of that, how are we living our lives? How are we governing our steps? What is the meaning of our life today? I really believe that Dan has got really good perspective on this topic. And if he could speak to his family and his friends in a few hours, he would wholeheartedly agree with this message. So let's bow our hearts before the Lord and let's let the Lord Jesus Himself minister to us.

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