

From the Introit, St. Peter, **We are looking forward to a new heaven and a new earth, the home of righteousness.** Home. To go to our true home. And as Isaiah wrote, **For behold, I create a new heavens, and a new earth, and the former things shall not be remembered or come to mind.** A new reality. All things new. Former things, brokenness and sin and death, gone. **The home of righteousness.**

But not yet. Now we have to deal with brokenness of homes, brokenness of bodies and minds, brokenness of yourself, broken and this is not your true home. Now we sit at the bedsides of dying family and friends; we watch our world passing away. But in the midst of all of it -our Lord has not left you with nothing to hold onto, with nothing of permanency. (That would be too much.) Isaiah tells us -even as **the heavens and earth are vanishing and wearing out, that the Lord's salvation is forever, and His righteousness will never be dismayed.** Those are words talking about Jesus, He is salvation. He is the righteousness of God; through His death and resurrection, delivered to you here and now and forever. And so in an ever-changing, dying world, in all our brokenness, you have something to hold onto: Him.

As Jesus put it: **Heaven and earth will pass away but My Word will NOT pass away.** My Word will not pass away. My Word that is upon you, in you. My Word that resounds in this place. His kingdom will not pass way; so neither will you. He will come in glory to judge. Not everyone will be called to His side. Many will be cast out and cursed. Excuses, reasons won't work . The time now of His grace will be over.

Now is the time to prepare. Know this! Preparation for the Lord's return isn't in the works of men, storing up stuff or merit, working hard, being frugal or even being nice and acting godly. You should work to speak kind words, less bad words, work to be good and right and pure and loving. Yet this is only your duty.

How do you **watch, be on your guard**, He says, **stay wake, again stay away, again stay awake.** He really means it. How do you do it? ... Here to receive His gifts, receive **My Word**. Dwelling in His works of forgiveness and life. His eternal Word, in hearing, receiving, reading, learning, is how you stay awake, are on your guard. It's not of you, but He gives all that is needed for you; not only to make it through each day, but until the last.

Wait eagerly, even anxiously, for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ, unto eternal life. Set your eyes on Him by faith in His Word and promises. Do not be consumed by this world and all its trappings.

As you wait upon His mercy, have mercy on those whom the Lord has brought into your life. Comfort and encourage the doubting in their weakness and fear. call unto them, in all fear and humility before God, before it's too late. Be gentle and compassionate, as He is with you. Forgive, as you are freely forgiven.

As you wait, repent. Repent not simply of sin and its free reign in your heart, mind, and life your brokenness. Repent for exchanging your joy for despair, your hope for fear, your confidence for doubt, and your present God for a distant dream. God is with you. That is exactly why we are here. We come not for an absent God who might watch us but for a present God who will save us, bring His saving work here.

The vision of Christ's return in Revelation 1, **Behold, He is coming with the clouds, every eye will see Him, even those who pierced Him, all tribes of the earth will wail on account of Him.** When Christ returns, He will still bear the marks of His victory, the wounds from the nails, spear; and on that Last Day, these marks will be a judgment against those who rejected Him and did not believe. Yet, those glorious scars, like in the window, will be a source of joy for those who believe His Word now and eagerly look for His appearing.

It's good for you to consider this before an altar: the wounds Christ when He won salvation for you, the fruit of those wounds offered here for your forgiveness; and because now is the time of salvation; and His return brings the final consummation, your true home.

We behold His glory here. Approach that altar, broken as you are, with fear -perhaps even with heart trembling and with love, and trust, gladly receiving what our Lord desires to give, comes to give. All the while looking forward to that Day when He will come for you on the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. We long to go to our true home. When it is time, at His appointed time. You will, then **the former things, brokenness shall not be remembered or come to mind.** Until then, **His salvation is forever.** Yours now, bask in all that is yours now. Come quickly, Lord Jesus.