

Quarter Two: Growing in a Relationship with God

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Lesson 13—Into Eternity

Sunday: Living Today

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- **This Quarter on “Growing in a Relationship with God”:**
 - Understanding our own heart condition & God’s desire to be in relationship with us
 - Understanding the true character of God
 - Understanding ourselves: need of humility

 - Role of the Bible
 - Role of prayer: Two weeks on prayer
 - Role of faith in the believer’s life
 - Role of sin, the law & the gospel
 - Role of repentance, bringing us from the darkness of sin to the freedom & assurance of justification (forgiveness & righteousness of Jesus)
 - Role of trials in the believer’s life to strengthen our relationship with Christ

 - How to witness for Christ, both by our experience & from the Word

- **This Week: “Into Eternity”**
 - The hope of heaven & eternity with Jesus:
 - Committing to our relationship with Jesus for the long haul – forever

 - **Malachi:** last book of OT
 - Written during Post-exilic period (around time of Ezra & Nehemiah)
 - Returned from 70-year captivity

 - Intertestamental period: 400 years of prophetic silence
 - People waiting for coming Messiah
 - Malachi ends with promise of John the Baptist (one like Elijah)
 - People knew
 - **Who** they were looking for
 - **What** to do while they waited

 - Mal 3:17, 18 – “‘They shall be Mine,’ says the Lord of hosts, ‘On the day that I make them My jewels.’ ... (18) Then you shall again discern between the righteous and the wicked, between one who serves God and one who does not serve Him.”

 - **Today,** period of prophetic silence
 - NT prophets & later, EGW
 - People waiting for 2nd Return of Jesus
 - Revelation ends with promise that He’s coming
 - Rev 22:20, 21 – “He who testifies to these things say, ‘Surely I am coming quickly.’ Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus! (21) The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen.”

- We know
 - **Who** we're looking for
 - **What** to do while we wait
- **Who are we looking for?**
 - Jesus
 - Acts 1:11 – "...this same Jesus, who was taken up from you into heaven, will so come in like manner as you saw Him go into heaven."
 - Our Savior & Redeemer
 - Our Lord & our soon coming King
 - Our best Friend
 - Isa 25:9 – "And it will be said in that day, 'Behold, this is our God; we have waited for Him, and He will save us. This is the Lord; we have waited for Him; we will be glad and rejoice in His salvation.'"
 - Waiting for Jesus –
 - World of sin & sickness
 - Despair & death
 - Devastation & destruction – is over
 - Heb 11:10 – "City whose builder & maker is God"
 - Rev 21:4 – A God who will dwell with us & wipe away every tear from our eyes
- **What to do while we wait?**
 - Hold on to Jesus
 - Heb 10:37 – "For yet a little while, & He who is coming will come & will not tarry."
 - Share Him
 - As far as we can
 - As long as we can
 - With everything we have

Memory Text: "Beloved, now we are children of God; and it has not yet been revealed what we shall be, but we know that when He is revealed, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is" (1 John 3:2, NKJV).

The week in brief:

- 1. **Sunday:** Living Today (Jill)
 - Ps 80 – end-time living today: how-to live-in light of eternity
- 2. **Monday:** Finally, Face-to-Face (SQ)
 - Various Scriptures – promise & reality of the Second Coming of Christ
- 3. **Tuesday:** The Bride (John L)
 - Rev 21 – the bride as the New Jerusalem - & as God's people
- 4. **Wednesday:** Follow the Lamb (James)
 - Various Scriptures – the joy of eternity = being united forever with Jesus
- 5. **Thursday:** "Come!" (Ryan)
 - Various Scriptures – the call of God to come: come accept His gift of salvation; respond to His invitation of grace

Sunday: Living Today

Matt 24:6 – 11; 1 Pet 4:7; James 4:13, 14; Ps 80:1 – 3, 14 – 19

- **Lesson Renamed:** “How-to live-in light of eternity”
- Today’s world:
 - Matt 24 –
 - Wars, rumors of wars
 - Famines
 - Pestilences – crisis of health
 - Earthquakes – natural disasters
 - Persecution
- **7 Keys:** How-to live-in light of eternity
 - **1. Be Purposeful (intentional)**
 - 1 Pet 4:7 – “But the end of all things is at hand; therefore be serious and watchful in your prayers.”
 - Pay attention to the signs of the times
 - Focus on Jesus
 - Don’t float: be intentional about your relationship with Jesus
 - **2. Be prepared** (in context of end times)
 - Rom 13:12 – “The night is far spent, the day is at hand. Therefore let us cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the **armor** of light.”
 - Armor = Gk, “weapons”
 - Don’t go into battle unprepared: wear the armor of God (Eph 6)
 - **3. Be focused**
 - Rom 13:14 – “But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to fulfill its lusts.”
 - Focus on Jesus – the Author & Finisher of our faith (Heb 12)
 - Don’t focus on fleshly lusts & passions:
 - **4. Be prayerful**
 - 1 Thess 5:16 – 18 – “Rejoice always. (17) Pray without ceasing, (18) in everything give thanks; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.”
 - Live in constant communion with God (Enoch)
 - Don’t neglect prayer
 - **5. Be Ready**
 - James 4:14 – “...For what is your life? It is even a vapor that appears for a little time and then vanishes away.”
 - Matt 24:44 – the Son of Man comes at a moment we think not
 - Life is uncertain at best: live as if Jesus could come today
 - **6. Be Revived**
 - Ps 80:18, 19 – “...Revive us, and we will call upon Your name. (19) Restore us, O Lord God of hosts; cause Your face to shine, and we shall be saved!”
 - Mal 4 – God will send Elijah to turn the hearts of the parents to the children, & children to their parents

- Revival amongst families before Jesus' return
- Acts 3 – repent & turn back, that your sins be blotted out, that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord, that He may send Jesus Christ (speaking of the 2nd Coming)
 - Revival of our own heart before Jesus' return
- **7. Be Persevering**
 - Matt 24:13 – “But he who endures to the end shall be saved.”
 - Rev 2:10 – “...be faithful unto death, and I will give you the crown of life.”
 - Endure, looking unto Jesus
 - Don't give up this close to the finish line!
- **7 Keys:** How-to live-in light of eternity
 - 1. Be purposeful (intentional)
 - 2. Be prepared
 - 3. Be focused
 - 4. Be prayerful
 - 5. Be ready
 - 6. Be revived
 - 7. Be persevering