

II Peter 3:1-4

1-4. Beloved, I now write to you this second epistle (in both of which I stir up your pure minds by way of reminder), that you may be mindful of **the WORDS which were SPOKEN BEFORE by the HOLY PROPHETS, and of the COMMANDMENT of us the APOSTLES** of the Lord and Savior, knowing this first: that **SCOFFERS will come in the LAST DAYS, walking according to THEIR OWN LUSTS**, and saying, "Where is the promise of His coming? For **since the FATHERS FELL ASLEEP, all things continue AS THEY WERE** from the beginning of creation."

- **II Peter 1:13** "Yes, I think it right, as long as I am in this tent, to _____ you up by _____ you."
- **Jude 17** "But you, beloved, remember the _____ which were spoken before by the _____ of our Lord Jesus Christ: how they told you that there would be _____ in the last time who would walk _____ to their own ungodly _____."
- **Acts 3:20-21** "And that He may send Jesus Christ, who was _____ to you _____, whom heaven must receive until the time of restoration of all things, which God has _____ by the _____ of all His holy _____ since the world _____."
- **Luke 1:70** "As He _____ by the _____ of His _____, who have been since the world _____."
- **I Thessalonians 4:1-4** "Finally then, brethren, we _____ and _____ in the Lord Jesus that you should abound more and more, just as you _____ from _____ how you ought to _____ and to _____ God; for you know what _____ we _____ you through the Lord Jesus. For this is the _____ of _____, your sanctification: that you should abstain from sexual immorality; that each of you should know how to possess his own vessel (body) in sanctification and honor."

Definition: "The COMMANDMENT of us the APOSTLES" - The apostles were only repeating the commandments of Jesus, and **Jesus said, "If you love Me, keep My commandments"** (John 14:15). I remember as a new Christian wondering, "What are those commandments? Are they the Ten Commandments? I thought the New Testament teaches that we are not under the law, but under grace? So how does that fit in with keeping the commandments of Jesus?" The answer is found in several principles or truths which are repeated in the Scriptures: **1.)** If you love Jesus you will keep His commandments; **2.)** All the commandments are summed up in "**LOVE God and LOVE your neighbor as yourself**"; **3.)** The Holy Spirit gives us the love of God in our hearts and the power to carry out the commandments; **4.)** Keeping His commandments and **abiding in His LOVE** is proof that we belong to Him. So, it is a continuous cycle of God pouring His love into us so that we can keep His commandments, and our obeying His commandments keeps us abiding in His love.

- **John 14:15** "If you _____ Me, _____ My _____."
- **John 14:21 & 23-24** "He who has My _____ and _____ them, it is he who _____ Me. And he who loves Me will be loved by My Father, and I will love him and manifest Myself to him." "Jesus answered and said to him, 'If anyone _____ Me, he will _____ My _____; and My Father will love him, and we will come to him and make Our home with him. He who does _____ love Me does _____ keep My _____; and the word which you hear is not Mine but the Father's who sent Me.'"

- **I John 5:2-3** "By this we know that we _____ the children of God, when we _____ God and keep His _____. For this is the _____ of God, that we _____ His _____. And His commandments are not burdensome."
- **Romans 13:8-10** "Owe no man anything except to _____ one another, for he who _____ another has fulfilled the _____. For the commandments, 'You shall not commit adultery,' 'You shall not murder,' 'You shall not steal,' 'You shall not bear false witness,' 'You shall not covet,' and if there is any other _____, are all _____ up in this saying, 'You shall _____ your neighbor as yourself.' _____ does no harm to a neighbor; therefore _____ is the _____ of the law."
- **Matthew 22:36-40** "'Teacher, which is the great commandment in the law?' Jesus said to him, 'You shall _____ the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind. This is the _____ and _____ commandment. And the second is like it: You shall _____ your neighbor as _____. On these two commandments hang _____ the _____ and the Prophets.'"
- **John 15:12** "This is My _____, that you _____ one another as I have _____ you."
- **I John 2:7** "Brethren, I write _____ new commandment to you, but an _____ commandment which you have had from the _____. The old commandment is the _____ which you heard from the _____."
- **I John 3:11** "For this is the _____ that you _____ from the _____, that we should _____ one _____."
- **I John 3:23** "And this is His _____, that we _____ in the name of His Son _____ Christ, and _____ one _____, just as He _____ us."
- **I John 3:18-19** "My little children, let us not _____ in word or in tongue, but in deed and in _____. And _____ we _____ that we are of the _____, and shall _____ our _____ before Him."

Definition: "You KNOW what COMMANDMENTS WE GAVE YOU through the Lord Jesus" - The apostles also gave more detailed commandments to the Believers, and **instruction for how they "ought to walk and to please God."** The Apostle Paul says, "Brethren, we urge and exhort in the Lord Jesus that you should abound more and more, **just as you received from us HOW YOU OUGHT to WALK and to please God; for you know what commandments** we gave you through the Lord Jesus" (I Thessalonians 4:1-2). When the Bible talks about our "walk" it means our daily conduct, behavior and lifestyle. The apostles sometimes **needed to spell out in more detail what the original commandment of Jesus meant in our daily "walk" and how we ought to conduct ourselves in this life.** Wouldn't it be great if we all could just "love one another" and never sin against each other? But life isn't that easy, and there are **"CARNAL" Christians (those controlled by their "flesh"** rather than the Holy Spirit) and new baby Believers who don't know or understand, and it must be explained to them/us in more detail, and even warnings given. However, these are not commandments in order for people to have some kind of "works religion" and try to earn their way to God. **These are commandments and instructions for those who are ALREADY SAVED, so that God's people, true Believers, may know how to live a life that is pleasing to God.**

- **I John 2:3-6** "Now _____ we _____ that we know Him, if we _____ His _____. He who says, 'I know Him,' and does _____ keep His commandments, is a _____, and the truth is _____ in him. But whoever _____ His _____, truly the _____ of God is perfected in him. By this we _____ that we are _____ Him. He who says he

abides in Him _____ himself also to _____ just as _____ walked."

- **I Corinthians 3:1-3** "And I, brethren, could _____ speak to you as to spiritual people but as to _____, as to _____ in Christ. I fed you with _____ and not with solid food; for until now you were _____ able to _____ it, and even now you are still not able; for you are still _____. For where there are envy, strife, and divisions among you, are you not _____ and _____ like mere men?"

Definition: "SCOFFERS will come in the LAST DAYS" - A "scoffer" is one who shows mocking contempt, scorn or derision. These people mock and make fun of God's word and the promise of Jesus' return. "**The Last Days**" refers to the time **just BEFORE the RETURN of Jesus Christ** to the earth. Lawlessness and wickedness will be one of the "signs" of His soon return, and the condition of the human race **just before Jesus returns** will be **as WICKED and EVIL as it was in Noah's days**, before God destroyed the earth with the Flood.

- **II Timothy 3:1-4** "But know this, that in the _____ perilous times will _____: for men will be lovers of _____, lovers of money, boasters, _____, blasphemers, _____ to parents, unthankful, unholy, _____, unforgiving, slanderers, without self-control, brutal, despisers of good, traitors, headstrong, haughty, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God...."
- **I Timothy 4:1-2** "Now the Spirit expressly says that in the _____ some will depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing _____ and doctrines of _____; speaking _____ in hypocrisy, having their _____ seared as with a hot iron."

Definition: "Since the FATHERS FELL ASLEEP" - "The Fathers" refers to the patriarchs of the Old Testament such as Adam and Eve, Enoch, Noah, and Moses. "Fell asleep" means they died. The Bible uses the term "sleep" or "being asleep" to refer to the death of a Believer, **but it is ONLY their body that is "sleeping"** or waiting in the grave until the resurrection - their soul/spirit has gone immediately to be with the Lord. **When Jesus said, "She is not dead, but sleeps," and "Our friend Lazarus sleeps; but I go that I may awake him out of sleep,"** He was speaking of their death. Again, in Scripture where death is referred to as "sleep" it is NOT referring to the real person, the soul and spirit, but only to the **physical BODY** being asleep, and that body will be awakened at the resurrection. In Matthew 27:52, it says the **"BODIES of the SAINTS who had FALLEN ASLEEP were RAISED"** - it is not their bodies AND souls. Jesus made it very clear in His story of the rich man and Lazarus the beggar, that both the righteous dead and the unrighteous dead are **fully conscious after death**, even though their bodies were buried in the grave (Luke 16:19-31). Also, when Jesus raised Jairus' daughter from the dead, it says **"her spirit came again**, and she rose," which indicates that her spirit had already left her body (something has to leave first before it can return). The Apostle Paul makes it very clear that when we are **"absent from the body"** we are immediately **"present with the Lord."** Paul also says in I Thessalonians 4: that the Lord will "bring with Him" the dead in Christ, as their bodies are being resurrected at the Rapture. If Jesus is going to bring the departed saints with Him from heaven, it is obvious that their souls were not sleeping in the grave with their bodies. If He is going to "bring with Him those who sleep in Jesus" (I Thessalonians 4:14), then He already had them in His possession. **It says "bring with Him" NOT "coming to get them"** (except that He is coming to get those of us who are still alive). Jesus will come with the souls/spirits of the saints who have already died, and will reunite them with their bodies which have been "asleep" until the resurrection.

- **I Thessaonians 4:13-17** "But I do not want you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning those who have fallen _____, lest you sorrow as others who have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus _____ and _____ again, even so God will _____ with Him those who _____ in _____. For this we say to you by the word of the Lord, that we who are _____ and remain until the _____ of the Lord will by no means precede those who are _____. For the _____ Himself will descend from _____ with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God. And the _____ in _____ will rise _____. Then we who are _____ and remain shall be caught up together with them in the _____ to meet the _____ in the _____. And thus we shall _____ be _____ the Lord."
- **II Corinthians 5:6 & 8** "Therefore we are always confident, _____ that while we are at home in the _____, we are absent from the Lord." (Vs. 8) "We are confident, yes, well pleased rather to be _____ from the _____ and to be _____ with the _____."
- **Luke 8:52-55** ".....but He said, 'Weep not; she is not _____, but _____.' And they laughed Him to scorn, knowing that she was _____. And He put them all out, and took her by the hand, and called, saying, 'Maid, arise.' And her _____ came _____, and she arose..."
- **Matthew 27:51-53** "And behold, the veil of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom; and the earth quaked, and the rocks were split, and the _____ were opened, and many _____ of the _____ who had fallen _____ were _____; and coming out of the graves _____ His _____, they went into the holy city and appeared to many."

Definition: "AFTER HIS RESURRECTION" - NO ONE could be bodily resurrected from the dead until Jesus WENT FIRST. Christ is the FIRSTFRUITS of the resurrection and FIRSTBORN from the dead (see Colossians 1:18, I Corinthians 15:20). **No one's soul or spirit could go directly into the presence of God BEFORE JESUS opened the way** (that is what the VEIL in the TEMPLE being TORN IN TWO symbolizes). See also John 14:1-6, Hebrews 11:32-40 - Jesus had to GO FIRST and PREPARE **the WAY for us to come into the Father's presence.**

- **Daniel 12:1b-2** ".....and at that time your people, everyone who is found _____ in the _____, will be rescued. And many of those who _____ in the dust of the earth will _____, these to everlasting _____, but the others to disgrace and everlasting contempt (condemnation)."

Definition: "Those who SLEEP in the DUST of the EARTH" - This means those who are PHYSICALLY DEAD and their bodies are in the grave, buried in the ground. The Bible often refers to death as "sleep" and the dead as "being asleep," but **it is NEVER a SOUL SLEEP.** Only **the physical BODY is "asleep"** and waiting to be AWAKENED at the resurrection. The SOULS of the people have already LEFT their BODIES to either be with God, if they were saved, or for the UNSAVED, to await the JUDGMENT and be thrown into hell. For the believer in Jesus Christ **"to be ABSENT from the BODY"** is **"to be PRESENT with the Lord."**