

“Are We There Yet?” 「我們到了嗎？」

2 Peter 彼得後書3:8-10

Trinity Baptist Church, Vancouver, June 4, 2023; Pastor Lee Boehm

Let's pray: Gracious God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, we ask that You would now speak to us by your word; we ask that You would enlighten us by Your Holy Spirit, and we ask that we would live in the eager expectation of Jesus returning soon. Amen.

讓我們禱告：仁慈的神、聖父、聖子、聖靈，我們祈求祢現在親自對我們說話；我們祈求祢用祢的聖靈光照我們，我們祈求活在耶穌快要再來的熱切期待中。阿們。

If you've ever gone on a long road trip with young children,

如果你曾經帶著年幼的孩子去長途旅行過，

you'll know that even when you've barely left home,

你就會知道，即使你離開家沒過多久，

you will start to hear the questions:

你就會開始聽到下面這些問題：

“Are we there yet?”;

「我們到了嗎？」

or “when will we be there?”

或者「我們什麼時候才能到那？」

It's very difficult to explain to young children how to measure the time ahead.

實在是很難向孩子們解釋如何丈量接下來的時間概念。

Imagine this scenario:

想像一下這樣的場景：

you're driving from Vancouver to Banff National Park

你正從溫哥華開車前往班夫國家公園

– and you've told the children in the back seat that before we get to Banff,

—你告訴後座的孩子們，在我們到達班夫之前，

there's a wonderful attraction for children called “The Enchanted Forest”.

有一個很棒的兒童景點，叫做「魔法森林」。

Maybe you've been there

或許你也去過那裡

– I remember going there when I was a child, and we've taken our own children there.

–我記得我小時候去過，後來我們又帶著自己的孩子去玩過。

But once you promise such an exciting stop, the kids will keep asking “how long until we get to the Enchanted Forest”.

但是，一旦你說出有一個如此令人興奮的地方，孩子們就會一直追問「還要多久才能到魔法森林」。

They will ask several times an hour, for several hours.

在接下來的幾個小時內，他們每小時要問好幾次。

You left early in the morning, so you encourage the kids to have a nap on the drive, 因為你們一大早就出門了，所以在路上你鼓勵孩子們小睡一會兒，
but they are so excited that they will not sleep.

可他們太興奮了，導致他們不可能睡著。

But what often happens is that by the time you are approaching the Enchanted Forest, the kids have succumbed to exhaustion, and have finally fallen asleep.

但最常見的情形是，當你快要到魔法森林的時候，孩子們卻筋疲力盡，終於睡著了。
You pull over at the driveway to the attraction, but the kids are now in such a deep sleep that they can't be wakened.

你把車停在通往景點的車道上，但孩子們已經睡得太沉了，叫不醒了。

So you get back on the highway and finish the trip to Banff in silence.

所以你回到高速公路上，安靜地結束了去班夫的路程。

The next morning, the kids realize that they've missed the Enchanted Forest.

第二天早上，孩子們意識到他們錯過了魔法森林。

In the book of Second Peter, Peter is addressing the false teaching that questions whether Christ will return.

在彼得後書中，彼得正在討論質疑基督是否會再來的錯誤教導。

You can imagine the young Christians asking

你可以想像年輕的基督徒問

“how long until Jesus returns”,

「離耶穌再來還有多久」，

and “when will He be here?”

「祂什麼時候來這裡？」

They ask this repeatedly, until they grow tired of the question.

他們反覆問這個問題，直到他們厭倦了這個問題。

At that point, these false teachers suggest that Christ will never return.

到那時，這些假教師就暗示基督永遠不會再來了。

But indeed, Jesus will return.

但事實上，耶穌會再來。

However, those who have given up their faith in Him will not awaken to a glorious eternity.

然而，那些放棄對祂的信靠的人便不會甦醒，也不會進入那榮耀的永恆。

So Peter reminds these Christians that God's view of time is very different from ours.

所以彼得提醒這些基督徒，神對時間的看法與我們大不相同。

Peter reminds them of Psalm 90:4, which tells us that a thousand years of our time is like a single day to God.

彼得提醒他們詩篇90：4，告訴我們，我們一千年的時間對神來說就像一天。

Compared to God, we are like young children for whom waiting even an hour feels like an eternity.

與神相比，我們就像小孩子，等待一個小時都像是永恆。

But it isn't only that God's view of time is different from ours.

但不僅僅是因為神對時間的看法與我們不同。

The important point is that God is also sovereign over time.

重要的一點是，神也有著高過時間的主權。

“Sovereign” means having supreme rule and authority.

「主權」意味著擁有至高無上的統治和權威。

God created time, and so He rules over it.

神創造了時間，所以祂掌管著時間。

He can do whatever He wants, in whatever time He chooses.

祂可以在任何時間做任何祂想做的事。

That's why, when you read carefully, you'll see that Peter actually flips Psalm 90:4 around, to say it both backward and forward.

這就是為什麼，當你仔細閱讀時，你會發現彼得實際上翻轉了詩篇90：4，按著順序和倒序都說明了。

Not only is a thousand years of our time like a day to God, the reverse is also true:

不僅如此，我們一千年的時間對神來說就像一天，反之亦然：

a day of our time is like a thousand years to God.

我們一天的時間對神來說就像一千年。

That is because God can accomplish more in a single day than all of humanity can accomplish in a millennium.

那是因為神在一天內能完成的比全人類在一千年裡能完成的還要多。

You see, Peter is not giving us a mathematical formula

你看，彼得不是在給我們一個數學公式

– he is simply saying that our view of time is different than God's, and that God is sovereign over time.

– 他只是說我們對時間的看法與神不同，時間在神手裡。

If we remember this, it can help us be aware of false teaching and harmful extremes.

如果我們記住這一點，它可以幫助我們意識到錯誤的教導和有害的極端。

Many people have taken this statement that a thousand years is like a day to God, and tried to reduce it to a formula.

許多人把對神來說一千年就像一天的說法，試圖簡化成為一個數學公式。

Some have developed systems and calendars to predict when Christ will return.

有些人已經研發了系統和日曆來預測基督何時再來。

One of the many problems with this is that it puts God on a schedule.

這樣做的眾多問題之一就是它把神放在一個日程表上。

Instead of remembering that God is sovereign over time, people have devised a sort of calendar book in which God's appointments are entered in for him.

與牢記神在時間上的主權相反，人們設計了一個日曆表，然後替神輸入了祂的預約和日程。

I've never had a secretary like this, but I've heard of secretaries who keep charge of their boss's calendar,

我從來沒有這樣的秘書，但我聽說過負責老闆日程的秘書，

and begin each day by telling their boss what their appointments should be.

他們的每一天從告訴老闆他的日程開始。

God doesn't need a secretary to remind him of his appointments.

神不需要秘書來提醒祂祂的日程。

And He doesn't share his calendar with us.

祂也不與我們分享祂的日程。

He is sovereign over time, and He alone knows when Jesus will return.

時間是在神手裡，只有祂知道耶穌何時會再來。

Any attempt to develop a system to predict when Jesus will return ignores the sovereignty of God.

任何試圖建立一個系統來預測耶穌何時再來的企圖都忽視了神的主權。

We need to remember that in God's sovereign view of time, it has been like a just few short days since Jesus ascended from earth to Heaven.

我們需要記住，在神有著時間主權的視點中，耶穌從地上升到天堂只是短短的幾天。

He will return soon.

祂很快就會回來。

We just need to stay awake so that we don't miss out!

我們只需要保持清醒，這樣我們就不會錯過！

However, God's sovereignty over time does not mean that He is unconcerned with us,

然而，神掌管時間並不意味著祂不關心我們，

or that He is heartless with how He guides history.

或者說祂不在乎如何引導歷史。

Quite the opposite!

恰恰相反！

In verse 9 Peter explains that God's apparent slowness is due to his love and patience for us.

在第9節中，彼得解釋說，神表面看上去的緩慢來自祂對我們的愛和耐心。

Peter explains that God's purpose in this apparent delay is to grant us more time to come to repentance, so that we can all enter into the joy of Christ when He does return.

彼得解釋說，神這表面上的延遲意在給我們更多的時間來悔改，這樣當祂再來時，我們都可以進入基督的喜樂中。

Jesus himself indicated that God's timing would allow for people around the entire globe to hear the message of salvation before Jesus returns (Acts 1:8).

耶穌自己指出，神時間上的安排是承諾全世界的人在耶穌再來之前都能夠聽到救恩的信息（使徒行傳1：8）。

However, Peter is not thinking primarily of non-Christians in today's passage.

然而，在今天的經文中彼得主要考慮的並不是非基督徒。

He is writing to churches, and he says in verse 9 that God "is patient with you".

他寫信給教會，並且在信的第9節中傳達神「對你們的寬容」。

These Christians were in danger of drifting away from God's truth and missing out on Christ's kingdom.

這些基督徒有偏離神真理的危險，從而錯過基督的國度。

So God gave them time to repent of their sins and get back on the right track.

所以神給了他們時間悔改自己的罪，回到正軌。

And this is true for all of us, even if we have already put our faith in Jesus.

對我們來說每個人都應當如此，即使我們已經相信了耶穌。

Repentance is not a one-time event.

悔改不是一次性的事件。

Each of us needs to continually pursue growth in repentance, as the Holy Spirit shows each of us how to better align with his word in our behavior, our attitudes, and our beliefs.

我們每個人都需要在悔改中不斷追求成長，因為聖靈向我們每個人展示了如何在行為、態度和信仰上更好地與祂的話語保持一致。

I don't know about you, but I need to repent daily!

我不知道你的情形怎樣，對我而言，我每天都需要悔改！

In verse 10, Peter warns us that the day Jesus returns will "come like a thief".

在第10節中，彼得警告我們，耶穌再來的日子將「像賊一樣來到」。

Jesus also warned us that He would come like a thief in the night, and He followed up this warning with a short parable.

耶穌也警告我們，祂會在夜裡像賊一樣來，祂接著用一個簡短的比喻來警告。

In Matthew 24:45-51, Jesus tells of a master of an estate who goes away for a time, and who leaves his servants in charge of his household.

在馬太福音24：45-51中，耶穌講到一個莊園的主人離開了一段時間，留下他的僕人掌管他的家業。

The servants do not know when the master will return.

僕人不知道主人什麼時候回來。

But when the master returns, he wants to find his servants busy, caring for the estate and for the other servants.

但是當主人回來時，他願意看見他的僕人很忙，忙著照顧莊園和其他僕人。

It is the same with us.

對我們來說何嘗不是這樣呢。

When Jesus warns us that He will return suddenly, like a thief in the night, He does not want us to start speculating about his timing.

當耶穌警告我們祂會突然回來，就像黑夜裡的賊一樣，祂不希望我們臆測揣摩祂的時間。

Rather, He is warning us to always be busy serving God, by caring for his affairs on earth, and by caring for the people He has entrusted to us.

相反，祂警告我們要一直盡心服侍，處理祂在地上的事務和照顧祂託付給我們的人。This entails showing the love of Christ to everyone in our life, and sharing the message of Christ in both word and deed.

這包含向我們生命中的每個人展示基督的愛，並在言語和行為上分享基督的福音。

Jesus will indeed return, suddenly and without clear warning, at a time that only God the Father knows.

耶穌確實會再來，突然且沒有預警地，在一個只有父神知道的瞬間。

His return will not be merely metaphoric.

祂的再來將不只是一種比喻。

His return will not be only “spiritual”.

祂的再來將不只是「屬靈的」。

He will return physically, in his resurrected body.

祂將在物理層面上，在祂復活的肉體里回來。

His return will be visible to all the world.

祂的再來將會讓全世界看見。

Jesus makes it clear that He “will come at an hour when you do not expect him.” (Matt. 24:44).

耶穌清楚地表明，祂「將在你們想不到的時候再來。」（太24：44）。

So let’s not waste our time trying to predict the timing of his return.

因此，我們不要浪費時間試圖預測祂再來的日期。

Let’s just be busy serving Him.

我們反而應該盡心服侍祂。

One event I like watching on TV is the National Hockey League playoffs.

我喜歡在電視上看的一項賽事是國家冰球聯盟的季後賽。

There may be no more exciting sports event than an overtime period in hockey playoffs.

可能沒有比冰球賽的加時賽更激動人心的體育賽事了。

In many sports, when the game is tied at the end of a prescribed time, they may revert to free shots or some other device.

在許多運動中，當比賽在常規時間結束時打平了的話，他們可能會利用罰球，點球大戰，或一些其它的賽制。

I presume that this is intended to prevent the game from going on too long.

我認為這是為了防止比賽持續太久。

But in hockey playoffs, both teams continue playing in a normal fashion until one team finally scores.

但在曲棍球比賽中，兩支球隊都將繼續以正常的方式比賽，直到一支球隊得分。

It doesn't matter if it takes all night.

就算比賽持續一整晚也是如此。

The longest hockey game in NHL history took place in 1936, between the Detroit Red Wings and the Montreal Maroons.

國家冰球聯盟歷史上最長的冰球比賽發生在1936年，是底特律紅翼隊和蒙特利爾馬龍隊之間的一場比賽。

It took 6 overtime periods settle it – that's almost 3 normal hockey games packed into one very long night.

這場比賽持續到了第6個加時賽才結束 — 這是一個幾乎把3場正常的冰球比賽時長加在一起的漫長夜晚。

When Sandra and I were on vacation a couple of weeks ago, we stopped for dinner in Squamish.

幾周前，當Sandra和我度假時，我們在Squamish吃了晚飯。

As we entered the restaurant, I noticed that the playoff game between the Florida Panthers and the Carolina Hurricanes was on live TV.

當我們進入餐廳時，我注意到了一場佛羅里達黑豹隊和卡羅來納颶風隊的季後賽正在電視上直播。

As we left the restaurant, I noticed that the game was almost over.

當我們離開餐廳時，我注意到比賽就快結束了。

There were just a few minutes left, but – the score was tied.

只剩下幾分鐘了，但是 — 比分打平了。

When we got home to Vancouver, I was surprised to find that the game was still going on.

當我們回到溫哥華的家時，我驚訝地發現比賽還在繼續。

It was in overtime.

比賽已經進入加時賽了。

So I thought I would watch the end of the game -- surely it should end very soon.

所以我決定看完這場比賽 — 它肯定很快就要結束了。

It turned out to be the 6th-longest game in NHL history!

結果，這竟是國家冰球聯盟歷史上第6長的比賽！

The Panthers won with just a few seconds left in the 4th overtime period, at around 2am in their time zone.

黑豹隊在第4個加時賽只剩下幾秒鐘的時候獲勝了，那時他們所在的時區已是凌晨2點左右。

I was very happy that I tuned in, and that I did not miss the game-winning goal around 11pm our time.

我很慶幸我收看了比賽，且沒有錯過這邊時間晚上11點左右的制勝球。

The next week, another game between went into overtime, and I thought to myself – there's no need to watch the entire overtime.

接下來的一周，另一場比賽也進入了加時賽，我心想 — 沒有必要看完整個加時賽。

I can first eat dinner, relax, and then watch the game.

我可以先吃晚飯，放鬆一下，然後再看比賽。

I'll still catch the end.

我還是可以看到比賽的結尾的。

But this was a bad calculation.

但這是一個糟糕的計算。

It turned out to be one of the shortest overtime games – the winning goal came within 2 minutes of the beginning of overtime.

事實證明，這是歷史上最短的加時賽之一 — 制勝球在加時賽開始后的 2 分鐘內就出現了。

But I missed it.

但我錯過了這個球。

Why am I telling you these hockey stories?

我為什麼要告訴你這些有關冰球的故事？

The point is this: In overtime, you never know when the game will end.

道理是這樣的：在加時賽中，你永遠不知道比賽什麼時候結束。

However, at any given moment you know that the end of the game is near.

但是，你在任何既定的時刻都知道遊戲可能馬上結束。

You aren't waiting for anything else to happen first– all that remains is for the winning goal to be scored.

你不會去等待任何別的事情先發生 — 唯一剩下的就是打進那個致勝球。

All activities are focused on this final event occurring.

一切都將集中在這最後發生的事件上。

If you are a player in the game, every time it is your turn to be on the ice, you must play like this is your last turn.

如果你是在賽場上的隊員，每次輪到你上場時，你必須要把這當成你的最後一個回合一樣去比賽。

You must give your all, you must play your very best, you must give 100%, every time you are on the ice.

只要你在滑冰場上，你就必須全力以赴，你就必須發揮出你最高的水準，你必須付出你的百分之百。

For the end is near.

因為終末就要來臨了。

There is no point in saving your energy for the next turn.

為下一次機會省精力是沒有意義的。

That's what makes the game so exciting.

這就是這個比賽如此令人興奮的原因。

In every minute of overtime, no matter how long it goes on, the end is near!

加時賽的每一分鐘，無論持續多久，終點都近了！

And that makes the Christian life exciting too.

類似的原因也使基督徒的生活令人興奮。

We're not lounging around because Jesus will return in some distant time.

我們並沒有終日閒逛懶散，仿佛耶穌只會在遙遠的未來再來。

He could return today.

祂今天就可能回來。

So each day we give Him our 100%, serving Him 24/7.

因此，我們每天都要給祂我們的百分之百，全天候地服侍祂。

We seek to make the most of each and every day, because this day could be our last day before we see Him return in glory.

我們力求充分地利用每一天，因為這可能就是我們仰望祂榮耀歸來前的最後一天。

Peter continues to warn us in verse 10 that when Christ returns, "everything done [on earth] will be laid bare" before the judgment of God.

彼得在第10節繼續警告我們，當基督再來時，「地上所行的一切都要暴露（原文「燒毀」也有「暴露」）在神的審判面前。」

We'll hear more about this from Pastor Callum next Sunday.

下周日，我們將從Callum牧師那裡聽到更多關於這方面的信息。

But in the meantime we know that Jesus could return at any moment, and that our hearts and deeds will be open to his gaze.

但與此同時，我們知道耶穌隨時可能再來，我們的心思和行為都無法向祂隱藏。

In light of this, let's examine our own hearts daily, and let's ask the Spirit's help to continually grow in repentance.

有鑒於此，讓我們每天檢查自己的心，讓我們祈求聖靈的幫助，使我們在悔改中不斷成長。

Jesus could return on any given day, so each day, let's aim to be found by Him as faithful servants.

耶穌可能在任何一天再來，所以每一天，我們應致力於成為忠心的僕人來到祂面前。

Let's take each day as an opportunity and as a gift.

讓我們把每一天都當作一次機會和一份禮物。

Let's serve our God eagerly, 100%, trying to do our very best for his affairs here on earth, and caring for those He has placed in our lives.

讓我們熱切地、百分之百地服侍我們的神，努力為祂在地上的事務盡我們最大的努力，並照顧祂放在我們生命中的人。

Let's take every opportunity to share his good news of salvation in word and in deed.

讓我們抓住每一個機會，在言語和行為上分享祂救贖的好消息。

Instead of asking "when will we get there?",

與其詢問「我們什麼時候才能到那？」

let's stay alert and awake, and serve our God with all our heart, soul, mind, and strength

(Mark 12:30). Amen.

我們應該保持警覺和清醒，盡心、盡性、盡意、盡力地事奉我們的神（馬可福音12：30）。阿們。