

## *Futurism*

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Unless otherwise stated Scripture quotes are from the NLT

### **Introduction:**

Futurism = Futuristic Living = Living today in light of tomorrow.

What we believe effects how we live and how we live is the revealed evidence of what we believe! It's very difficult to actually hide what one is, believing. Our conduct throughout any given day pictures what is in the human heart. We need to know how and what God wants us to believe so we can live as He has purposed!

For the true Born Again Believer life on earth is described in Scripture as a pilgrimage, (1P. 2:11, Heb 11:13). Clearly earth in its present state is not our home. The writer of Hebrews says that earth is not our real home.

[Heb.13:14 - For this world is not our home; we are looking forward to our city in heaven, which is yet to come.](#) If this is what we really believe than it will effect how we live today. If we really believe that what we do now effects our tomorrow we will make our decisions with much prayer and great care!

The concept of Jesus soon return is quite boldly challenged by the unsaved and even in some Christian circles. Is it correct? Is it a God thing to be "futuristic" in life? It's very interesting to see from the New Testament Scriptures just how "futuristic" the early Church Believers were! In fact, to be living with a continual anticipation of Jesus' return was, for the Apostle Paul, very commendable! In reading the Apostolic books it seems that "futuristic living" was a sign a healthy conversion to the Lord Jesus Christ.

[1 Thes.1:3 - As we talk to our God and Father about you, we think of your faithful work, your loving deeds, and your \*\*continual anticipation of the return of our Lord Jesus Christ.\*\*](#)

Clearly the fact that the Thessalonian Believers lived in continual anticipation of the Second Coming of Jesus Christ was significant to the Apostle Paul. So much so that he commends them for it. Why is this? If it was important in the first century church how much more now, 2000 years latter!

The importance of "Futuristic Living" runs all the through 1<sup>st</sup> & 2<sup>nd</sup> Thessalonians.

[1 Thes.1:10 - And they speak of how \*\*you are looking forward to the coming of God's Son from heaven-Jesus\*\*, whom God raised from the dead. He is the one who has rescued us from the terrors of the coming judgment.](#)

To live with the anticipation of Jesus' return signifies spiritual priority, life lived in view of the eternal Kingdom of God. This is how Abraham lived! It's how Moses lived! It's how the Apostles Peter, John and Paul lived! And this is how we are to live today. These God fearing people serve as examples of what is meant by "Futuristic Living". Spiritual decisions made today profoundly effect our tomorrow!

There are a few areas of life that are radically affected when we choose to embrace the truth of Jesus' soon return. A number of things happen at that time! Things that need our attention now! To list of those events does not suggest an order of importance, but only servers to draw our attention to areas of significance. This knowledge should both inspire and encourage us apply ourselves spiritually in light of the future.

What is the real purpose for the Christian life here on earth? What's it really all about? What is being accomplished in our lives that couldn't be done in heaven? When we repent of our sins and receive Jesus Christ as our personal Lord and Saviour why are we immediately translated to heaven?

### Thinking The Jesus Way:

Jesus is our example for everything we do! He came from heaven and everything He while here on earth is summed up in Heb 10:7 - **Then I said, 'Look, I have come to do your will, O God-just as it is written about me in the Scriptures.'** Every breath Jesus breathed, every thought, every action was motivated out of His desire to please His Heavenly Father. Jesus made this very profound and challenging statement in Jn. 4:34 **"My nourishment comes from doing the will of God, who sent me, and from finishing his work."** Every act of obedience gave Him spiritual nourishment! It fed His soul! Do we understand this? Do we understand the power and significance of obedience? The more we obey the more we grow!

One of the first challenges of a New Believer comes in the area of "thinking". Prior to salvation the human mind is the devil's play ground. In fact, the Word clearly identifies pre-salvation thinking as one of the two culprits that are responsible for separating us from God. **Col 1:21 - This includes you who were once so far away from God. You were his enemies, separated from him by your evil thoughts and actions.** How important is our thinking? It's critical! It has the ability to separate us from God! Any God provided salvation **MUST** affect our thought life. Something has to happen that brings our thinking more inline with that of Jesus.

Was "futuristic" while here on earth. How did He think about "today" and "tomorrow"? Statements like, "I am not of this world" and "my kingdom is not of this world" give us the clear indications we need! Jesus was "other world" minded! He was heavenly minded! He knew where He from and He clearly knew where He was going in life. He saw beyond the "here and now"! He lived "today" with "tomorrow" in mind. If there was ever that God's people in Canada needed to re-adopt Jesus kind of thinking it's now!

God's full salvation fully embraces the renewing of the human mind. This renewing affects our entire spiritual person. It effects what we think about God, about His plans and purposes! It affects the choices and moulds our decisions! **Rom.12:2 - Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is- his good, pleasing and perfect will.** (NIV) The NLT puts it this way: **"Don't copy the behavior and customs of this world, but let God transform you into a new person by changing the way you think. Then you will know what God wants you to do, and you will know how good and pleasing and perfect his will really is".** How important is a renewed mind? Until this starts happening we will never really understand the will of God for our lives.

I once heard this said of someone, "They're so heavenly minded they're no earthly good." Our western culture is so earth bound and "here and now" centred that it's perceived to be a waste of time to meditate on the things of God or to pray. What about planning for heaven! What about investing in the spiritual things of God's Kingdom! "Futuristic thinking" and "futuristic living" can be, seriously challenged by humanistic thinking! Here what the Holy Spirit is saying to us today: **Col 3:2 - Let heaven fill your thoughts. Do not think only about things down here on earth.**

Jesus lived and planned for the future and when I say future I mean eternity. I'm not talking about planning about what we're going to be doing ten years from now. I'm talking about planning for hundred and ten years from now. What are you going to be doing then? Do you really believe that the choices and decisions you make today will effect you after you've wrapped up your life here on earth?

### ETERNAL REWARD:

Making quality decisions throughout the day to live in obedience to the Word of is fundamental to "New Covenant" Christianity. Understanding that these decisions are not only profitable in the "here and now" but also go along way to affecting our eternity can make the decision process more decisive! Choosing to do what is right is not always easy and choosing to fallow through with that decision can be even more difficult! If we can see the eternal value it will help when the going gets tough.

Moses is one of the great Old Testament examples of "Futuristic Living". He made some very difficult choices but did so in light of the future, in light of eternity!

**Heb.11: 24-26 - It was by faith that Moses, when he grew up, refused to be treated as the son of Pharaoh's daughter. <sup>25</sup> He chose to share the oppression of God's people instead of enjoying the fleeting pleasures of sin. <sup>26</sup> He thought**

it was better to suffer for the sake of the Messiah than to own the treasures of Egypt, for he was looking ahead to the great reward that God would give him.

Moses was destined to great things in Egypt! He had been raised as the son of Pharaoh's daughter. From Scripture we understand that he was well educated and very skilled. He had great potential in the ruling power of the world. The time came in his life when he made a major life altering decision. He chose to be personally identified with God's people! There have been times throughout history when this would not have been difficult decision to make but this was not one of those times. God's people were being severely oppressed by the Egyptians. They had been in slavery for nearly four hundred years. The treasures of Egypt were at Moses' disposal and all the Israelites had was the whip on their backs. Why would this intelligent, educated man choose God over all the pleasures of Egypt. Moses was futuristic! He believed in a tomorrow! He believed in eternity! He believed in an "after life", an eternal life and believed Almighty God was in control and would reward him for the decision to be identified with God's chosen people.

Moses decision was not to be some secret between him and God! This decision was from the heart and therefore motivated him to publicly and personally identify himself with the Israelites. This decision cost him his life, as it were! From that moment on life on earth for Moses would never be the same. All that he had gained in influence, power and wealth being the son of Pharaoh's was gone forever. He knew there would be no going back! There would be no life of luxury to be enjoyed! It was gone forever! Moses however made that decision realizing that everything this world had to offer him was at best only temporal. WOW! We need a revelation regarding the temporalness of this life. We need to see as clearly as Moses did the value, the eternal value living now for tomorrow, of living a futuristic life!

Moses strongly believed in the God of rewards. He believed that if he chose to serve God in the here and now that God would give him eternal rewards, rewards that never change with the fluctuation of the economy, is never threatened with the change of government and are not subject to decay by the elements of time!

Jesus strongly encouraged his disciples to think along the same lines as Moses did and He's encouraging us to do the same today!

Mk. 8:35 - If you try to keep your life for yourself, you will lose it. But if you give up your life for my sake and for the sake of the Good News, you will find true life.

Lk.6:22 - God blesses you who are hated and excluded and mocked and cursed because you are identified with me, the Son of Man. <sup>23</sup> "When that happens, rejoice! Yes, leap for joy! For **a great reward awaits you in heaven**. And remember, the ancient prophets were also treated that way by your ancestors.

Mt 6:19 - "Don't store up treasures here on earth, where they can be eaten by moths and get rusty, and where thieves break in and steal. <sup>20</sup> **Store your treasures in heaven, where they will never become moth-eaten or rusty and where they will be safe from thieves.**

Mk.10:21 - Jesus felt genuine love for this man as he looked at him. "You lack only one thing," he told him. "Go and sell all you have and give the money to the poor, and you will have **treasure in heaven**. Then come, follow me."

The clear teaching of Jesus and the Word is, during our lifetime on earth we are given the opportunity to invest in eternity. Ever day is a fresh new opportunity! Are we using our time on earth wisely? Should the Lord return today, or should something happen that our life on earth is terminated what will we have in our heavenly account?

### **FUTURISM EFFECTS PRESENT LIFESTYLE:**

What we believe about "tomorrow", eternity and more specifically, what we believe about our future will effect our "today" living! What we really believe will be manifest through our actions. Jesus told us that we can identify true believers by the fruit that is being produced in their lives. Actions! It's what we do that reveals what we're believing! The fruit producing sap goes virtually unseen but what it produces is the evidence of its presence. We can't see what's in the human heart! We can't be sure of the real motive behind any given action. What we can see, however it's action, the fruit that is seen.

James talks about actions proving the presence of faith! [Jms.2:17,18](#) - So you see, it isn't enough just to have faith. Faith that doesn't show itself by good deeds is no faith at all-it is dead and useless. <sup>18</sup> Now someone may argue, "Some people have faith; others have good deeds." I say, "I can't see your faith if you don't have good deeds, but I will show you my faith through my good deeds." You can see or appreciate faith without actions. Actions bring believing into the physical realm. It is here where the unseen believing of the heart is manifest for all to see. What good is it to say we believe in loving others, yet do nothing the manifests that faith?

We can say with our mouths that we love God but if these words are not supported by actions of obedience then our words are empty! We can go to church regularly, sing, give vocal expressions of praise and worship, we bow our knee and raise our hands along with all the rest, but if what we believe on Sundays does not compute to a life style that honors God seven days a week then our faith is dead faith!

If we really in the Second Coming of the Lord Jesus Christ that believing will effect how we live today! If we really believe that when Jesus Christ returns that we will have to stand before the judgement seat of Christ and give an account of our lives then that believing will effect how we live today! If we really believe that this temporal world will be burned up in the judgment fires of God that too will effect how we live and what decisions we make.

There's a very revealing truth in [1Jn.3](#) that reveals what we believe about Jesus Second Coming will effect how we live today. [1 Jn.3:2,3](#) - Yes, dear friends, we are already God's children, and we can't even imagine what we will be like when Christ returns. But we do know that when he comes we will be like him, for we will see him as he really is. <sup>3</sup> And **all who believe this will keep themselves pure**, just as Christ is pure.

If we believe that Jesus will come again and that we will personally see Him as He really is then we are motivated to holy living. Anyone who is not motivated to holiness by the thought that one day I meet Jesus face to face simply doesn't understand who He is or doesn't understand the justice and judgment of God.

### **AT JESUS APPEARING:**

What exactly should we expect when Jesus returns? [2Tim. 4:1](#) - And so I solemnly urge you before God and before Christ Jesus-who will someday **judge the living and the dead when he appears** to set up his Kingdom:

The Second Coming of the Lord Jesus Christ is inseparable from judgment. There is no doubt that God's wrath will be released in fiery judgment upon a Christ rejecting sin filled world. [2 Thes.1:7-10](#) - And God will provide rest for you who are being persecuted and also for us when the Lord Jesus appears from heaven. He will come with his mighty angels, <sup>8</sup> in flaming fire, bringing judgment on those who don't know God and on those who refuse to obey the Good News of our Lord Jesus. <sup>9</sup> They will be punished with everlasting destruction, forever separated from the Lord and from his glorious power <sup>10</sup> when he comes to receive glory and praise from his holy people. And you will be among those praising him on that day, for you believed what we testified about him.

Through Christ the true Believers escape the wrath of God. Clearly this is a part of the salvation package. [1Thes 5:9](#) - For God did not appoint us to suffer wrath but to receive salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ. (NIV) [Rom. 5:9](#) - Since we have now been justified by his blood, how much more shall we be saved from God's wrath through him! The vials of God's wrath, as described in the book of Revelation is not the portion of the true Believer! There is however a judgment that all Believers must face.

Judgement upon this world will not happen until God first judges His, own people. [1P. 4:17](#) - For the time has come for judgment, and **it must begin first among God's own children**. And if even we Christians must be

judged, what terrible fate awaits those who have never believed God's Good News? If we think, for one minute, that through Christ we will escape the Judgment Seat of Christ we are greatly mistaken. It's possible to have the idea that because I'm "in Christ" then God only sees me through the blood of Christ and that I will not be judged according to my works but according to the works of Christ. Salvation is an awesome thing! Forgiveness is an awesome thing! The grace of God upon our lives is an awesome thing but with all these blessing there is still "accountability" for our own personal actions. Rom. 14:12 - Yes, **each of us will have to give a personal account to God.** 1P. 1:17 - And remember that the heavenly Father to whom you pray has **no favorites when He judges. He will judge or reward you according to what you do.** So you must live in reverent fear of him during your time as foreigners here on earth. These revealed truths should effect us! They should seriously help us with our thinking. They should help us to prioritize our lives so that we are majoring on the spiritual eternal things rather than on the natural temporal things.

1Jn. 2:28 - And now, dear children, continue to live in fellowship with Christ **so that** when he returns, you will be full of courage and not shrink back from him in shame. How will it be on that day when Jesus returns? Or maybe you thinking, "No, Jesus won't come in my life time, I don't have to worry about that!" Even if that were true, everyone, of God's people will stand before the Lord Jesus Christ and give an account of their actions! It's so awesome to think that Almighty God has made it possible for us to be unashamed on that great and glorious when Jesus appears!

### **TO LOVE JESUS' APPEARING**

To be in love with a future event certainly falls into the category of "futuristic living". To love Jesus' appearing! To look forward to that great and glorious day when Jesus will bring through the heavenlies and appear for all to see! WOW! Titus expresses this so well! Titus 2:12,13 - **And we are instructed to turn from godless living and sinful pleasures. We should live in this evil world with self-control, right conduct, and devotion to God,** <sup>13</sup> **while we look forward to that wonderful event when the glory of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ, will be revealed.** Are looking forward to that day? Are we planning for it now?

We can get all enthralled with the details "prophecy"! We can look out over the globe and try to figure out where we are in God's timetable. Is everything lined up just right? Is the "One World Government" in place? How far away is "One World Religion"? What about the present push for "globalism". When will the great Russian Bear invade Israel? How close is China to mustering up an army of two hundred million people? Studying these details has a rightful place and if we are motivated to holy living as a result of our studies, then, great. If however we are lead to believe that the Second Coming of Christ is a long way off and I get sloppy about my Christian conduct then I'm in trouble. We allow the truth of Jesus Second Coming to touch our hearts in this generation. Every generation since the "early Church" has needed to live "futuristically"!

If we truly love Jesus appearing then this love will effect how we live today. The Holy Spirit is starting to awaken this love as never before in our generation. It very interesting to note that a study of former revival reveals a number of common factors! Two of which are "Holiness" and the "Second Coming" of the Lord Jesus Christ. The two go hand in hand. You see, if we believe in Jesus' Second Coming, when ever that is, we will be motivated to holy living. 1Jn.3:2,3 - **Yes, dear friends, we are already God's children, and we can't even imagine what we will be like when Christ returns. But we do know that when he comes we will be like him, for we will see him as he really is.**

<sup>3</sup> **And all who believe this will keep themselves pure, just as Christ is pure.**

To live in anticipation of that day doesn't require that be believe it will happen in our day! It might or it might not! Only God knows the exact hour and day! And don't let anyone tell you other wise. Mt 24:36 **"However, no one knows the day or the hour when these things will happen, not even the angels in heaven or the Son himself. Only the Father knows.** What we do know for absolute certain is that whether we are alive on earth when Jesus returns or whether we have gone the way of the grave we will all stand before Him and give an account! That we know and that should help us with our thinking. 2Tim. 4:8 - **And now the prize awaits me-the crown of righteousness that the Lord, the righteous Judge, will give me on that great day of his return. And the prize is not just for me but for all who eagerly look forward to his glorious return.** Can you honestly say that you are eagerly looking forward to Jesus glorious return to earth?

In closing I feel that I want to bring one more Scripture to our remembrance! [Heb.9:28](#) so also Christ died only once as a sacrifice to take away the sins of many people. He will come again but not to deal with our sins again. **This time he will bring salvation to all those who are eagerly waiting for him.** What's on our agendas? How much longer on the mortgage? When can get the new vehicle? I've only got five more years until retirement! It won't be long now and I'll be eligible for a raise! Finally I'll have the position in the corporation I've been waiting for! Well in a few more years we'll be able to retire, bye our condo and go on along cruise! How eager are we for Jesus return! Is it really a love have? I hope so! It can be!

**Suggested Prayer:** Father in Heaven I want to thank you for Jesus. Thank you that He came and that He did always those things that pleased you now please help me by powerfully effecting my life so I too will be found living in love obedience to your Word. Help me to be "futuristic". Help me to live today in light of tomorrow! I want to love Jesus appearing and I want to be unashamed when I stand before His Judgment Seat. Thank you, for your commitment to my spiritual well being! In Jesus name! Amen