

# Pursuit and Promise, Pt. 7

## The Summit

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### TODAY

The physical form of this outline looks a little different. This is the way Pastor Jimmy outlined it himself.

**Ascending the Mountain. Today we reach the top and take a look around.**

- **Onward and upward** — Change is possible, gradual, and promised.
- **The God Guarantee** — fruitful, never stumble, abundant entrance into heaven
- **Our firm foundation** — We can trust the word of God
- **False Prophets and teachers** — homosexual agenda, hyper grace, universalism.
- **Sin will disappoint you** and leave you empty, but you can find your way home!
- **Scoffers, Mockers, Sinners!**

### Describe the Summit. 2 Peter 3:14-18

Peter stands at the summit. He can look back at his life with Jesus, he was there when he was transfigured, he remembers denying Christ, he remembers breakfast with Jesus, the power of the Holy Spirit and the birth of the Church, and he sees the coming judgment and resurrection life in Jesus. While he awaits certain crucifixion and death, he writes this encouragement to us to hold our ground — to be diligent — to give our utmost.

**We all reach different summits in our lives — turning points where we have to assess where we are and what is important.**

- *We all stand at the Summit today with something.*
- *On the summit between the cross on one side and the return of Christ in the distance on the other. A current crisis right in the middle.*
- *Do we set up camp? Retreat? Or charge ahead into the glorious victory of Jesus?*

## Peter's last words

### 2 Peter 3:14-18

<sup>14</sup> Therefore, beloved, looking forward to these things, be diligent to be found by Him in peace, without spot and blameless; <sup>15</sup> and consider that the longsuffering of our Lord is salvation—as also our beloved brother Paul, according to the wisdom given to him, has written to you, <sup>16</sup> as also in all his epistles, speaking in them of these things, in which are some things hard to understand, which untaught and unstable people twist to their own destruction, as they do also the rest of the Scriptures. <sup>17</sup> You therefore, beloved, since you know this beforehand, beware lest you also fall from your own steadfastness, being led away with the error of the wicked; <sup>18</sup> but grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To Him be the glory both now and forever. Amen.

## Story from the Battle of Gettysburg:

More info on the Battle of Little Round Top

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Little\\_Round\\_Top](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Little_Round_Top)

On July 2, the [second day of the battle](#), Union forces were recovering from initial setbacks and hastily regrouping into defensive positions on a line of hills south of the town. Sensing the momentary vulnerability of the Union forces, the Confederates began an attack against the Union left flank. Chamberlain's brigade, commanded by Col. [Strong Vincent](#), was sent to defend [Little Round Top](#) by the army's Chief of Engineers, Brig. Gen. [Gouverneur K. Warren](#). Chamberlain found himself and the 20th Maine at the far left end of the entire Union line. He quickly understood the strategic significance of the small hill, and the need for the 20th Maine to hold the Union left at all costs. The men from Maine waited until troops from the [15th Regiment Alabama Infantry](#), commanded by Col. [William C. Oates](#), charged up the hill, attempting to flank the Union position. Time and time again the Confederates struck, until the 20th Maine was almost doubled back upon itself. With many casualties and ammunition running low, Col. Chamberlain recognized the dire circumstances and ordered his left wing (which was now looking southeast, compared to the rest of the regiment, which was facing west) to initiate a bayonet charge. From his report of the day: "At that crisis, I ordered the bayonet. The word was enough."

The 20th Maine charged down the hill, with the left wing wheeling continually to make the charging line swing like a hinge, thus creating a simultaneous [frontal assault](#) and [flanking maneuver](#), capturing 101 of the Confederate soldiers and successfully saving the flank.

For his "daring heroism and great tenacity in holding his position on the Little Round Top against repeated assaults, and carrying the advance position on the Great Round Top", Chamberlain was awarded the [Medal of Honor](#).

### *Chamberlain had three choices on the Summit*

#### 3 Choices

- 1. Set up camp. Freeze. Wait for reinforcements.*
- 2. Retreat. Compromise, instability, fear, and doubt.*
- 3. Fight! Hold the high ground at all costs. Lay it all on the line.*

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***Set up camp? We can be tempted, to settle in and make camp in our mountain top experiences.***

***While you are surrounded by false witnesses, distorters of the truth, a dying world, awaiting salvation from the Lord and the fulfillment of the kingdom... It is very tempting to set up camp and get comfortable.***

### **Matthew 17:1b-8**

Jesus took Peter, James, and John his brother, led them up on a high mountain by themselves; <sup>2</sup> and He was transfigured before them. His face shone like the sun, and His clothes became as white as the light. <sup>3</sup> And behold, Moses and Elijah appeared to them, talking with Him. <sup>4</sup> Then Peter answered and said to Jesus, "Lord, it is good for us to be here; if You wish, <sup>[a]</sup> let us make here three tabernacles: one for You, one for Moses, and one for Elijah." \* <sup>5</sup> While he was still speaking, behold, a bright cloud overshadowed them; and suddenly a voice came out of the cloud, saying, "This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. Hear Him!" <sup>6</sup> And when the disciples heard it, they fell on their faces and were greatly afraid. <sup>7</sup> But Jesus came and touched them and said, "**Arise, and do not be afraid.**" <sup>8</sup> **When they had lifted up their eyes, they saw no one but Jesus only.**

***Highs, Lows, back to Jesus. He says look at me — he touches us — says get up, don't be afraid— when they lift their eyes they saw Jesus only. There is something inside of us when we encounter the grace of God that wants to set up camp there.***

**Private practice** I saw successes that were a mess — and failures that were a mess. ***What I learned was that never reaching your goal was the same as reaching it.*** Both left a deep feeling of sadness.

### **What is the "high point" of my life where I want to settle in and get comfortable?**

I really struggled to think of a point where I would really want to set up camp and stay there. I realized I never really feel like I arrive. I never really feel like I have done enough. I am very driven by achievement, and no amount of achievement is enough. I always feel like I am failing. But no amount of achievement ever really fully satisfies me. I'm always pressing to earn God's love, and success in other people's eyes. It's exhausting.

### ***2 Peter 3:14***

***"Be diligent to be found in him without spot or blemish, and at peace...and count the patience of God as salvation."***

The emperor was repeatedly called “the savior of the world” and “the savior of the inhabited earth.” (Priene calendar inscription; 9 B.C.). When Rome would conquer a city — he would come in as “Savior” of the city.

***Contrast the emperor of Rome and Jesus.***

***Salvation is not passive. It is not something that is done to you (Rome). It is something you are invited into! We are invited to join in the reign of Christ NOW and until His glorious return.***

## Why is God’s patience salvation for you?

**2 Peter 3:14** is a clear description of **sanctification**.

*Who you are, who you are not yet, who you are becoming, who you ultimately will be — is made possible by Jesus — and this new kingdom life is enjoyed by entering into it.*

## Be diligent!

**2 Peter 3: 15b-16**

Also, our beloved brother Paul, according to the wisdom given to him, has written to you, <sup>16</sup> as also in all his epistles, speaking in them of these things, in which are some things hard to understand, which untaught and unstable *people* twist to their own destruction, as *they do* also the rest of the Scriptures.

*People twist the scriptures to say whatever they want it to say! He affirms Paul’s writing as the word of God! “Unstable and twisted to their own destruction.”*

*Error of the wicked is **not those who do not believe.***

*It is **those who do believe scriptures and continue to twist and compromise.***

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***RETREAT? Don’t lose your stability. Hold your ground! We all fall short but...***

**2 Peter 3:17**

<sup>17</sup> You therefore, beloved, since you know this beforehand, beware lest you also fall from your own steadfastness, being led away with the error of the wicked;

***When did Peter retreat?***

*Most obviously he denied Christ three times. When Jesus comes to reinstate him, we see that Peter has **retreated** back to fishing again.*

## **John 21:15-22 Jesus makes Peter breakfast — do you love me? Do you love me?**

15 And he said to Him, “Lord, You know all things; You know that I love You.” Jesus said to him, “Feed My sheep. 18 Most assuredly, I say to you, when you were younger, you girded yourself and walked where you wished; but when you are old, you will stretch out your hands, and another will gird you and carry you where you do not wish.” 19 This He spoke, signifying by what death he would glorify God. And when He had spoken this, He said to him, “Follow Me.” 20 Then Peter, turning around, saw the disciple whom Jesus loved following, (who also had leaned on His breast at the supper, and said, “Lord, who is the one who betrays You?”) 21 Peter, seeing him, said to Jesus, “But Lord, what about this man?” 22 Jesus said to him, “If I will that he remain till I come, what is that to you? You follow Me.”

**Here we have Peter in his moment of crisis— standing between the cross, and his failure. Jesus challenges him — knowing that he will face a terrible death — it had to be more than he could bear — he still asks, *what about John!?***

- **Discouragement?**
- **Shame?**
- **Fear?**
- **Comparison?**

**I have had a very difficult year. I have felt myself wanting to retreat. To give up. I have often felt frozen — felt like a failure.**

*A **midlife crisis** is a transition of identity and self-confidence that can occur in middle-aged individuals, typically 45–55 years old. The phenomenon is described as a psychological crisis brought about by events that highlight a person's growing age, inevitable mortality, and possibly lack of accomplishments in life. This may produce feelings of intense depression, remorse, and high levels of anxiety.*

*Everybody hits a wall. Inevitable mortality, lack of accomplishments...Peter?*

Maybe you're in a similar spot? You are at a crisis point, a turning point, a quitting point, a major failure or massive disappointment- well what does Jesus have to say to us? For me I just have hit a point of exhaustion, and I just felt like I hit a wall.

## **2 Corinthians 4:7-15**

7 But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellence of the power may be of God and not of us. 8 We are hard-pressed on every side, yet not crushed; we are perplexed, but not in despair; 9 persecuted, but not forsaken; struck down, but not destroyed— 10 always carrying about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life of Jesus also may be manifested in our body. 11 For we who live are always delivered to death for Jesus' sake, that the life of Jesus also may be manifested in our mortal flesh. 12 So then death is working in us, but life in you. 13 And since we have the same spirit of faith, according to what is written, “I believed and therefore I spoke,” we also believe and therefore speak, 14 knowing that He who raised up the Lord Jesus will also raise us up with Jesus, and will present us with you. 15 For all things are for your sakes, that grace, having spread through the many, may cause thanksgiving to abound to the glory of God.

**Thank God that He has come to call us back into the fight! Thank God we do not have to just cower and wait, or run away from what most grieves us, but we can fight! We can take what we have, spent and empty, and charge for the greater glory of God.**

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***Fight! But how do we fight?***

**Sometimes in the kingdom the way that we fight is to be willing to die. For Peter — that was literal crucifixion. For Chamberlain — it was the willingness to charge down the hill with no ammo.**

**What is your fight today? What is God calling you to do that only He can do?**

### **Luke 9:23-25**

<sup>23</sup> Then He said to them all, “If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow Me. <sup>24</sup> For whoever desires to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake will save it. <sup>25</sup> For what profit is it to a man if he gains the whole world, and is himself destroyed or lost?

***What are you grasping for?***

***What do you need to let go to really live?***

***Achievement, comparison, fear...?***

### **Stand in HIS strength!**

#### **Ephesians 6:10-13**

<sup>10</sup> Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might. <sup>11</sup> Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. <sup>12</sup> For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual *hosts* of wickedness in the heavenly *places*. <sup>13</sup> Therefore take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand.

**Charge! (with a limp and no ammunition)**

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## CONCLUSION

*We all stand at the Summit today with something. On the summit between the cross on one side and the return of Christ in the distance on the other.  
Do we set up camp? Retreat? Or charge ahead into the glorious victory of Jesus?*

- **Where are you setting up camp?**
  - What does that look like? Look at Jesus and do what He says — obedience to the word of Jesus is how you keep from being frozen.
- **Where have you retreated in your walk with Jesus?**
  - You see the weak spots; you know what you ought to do — but you're frozen or you're waffling. Do you twist your beliefs to fit your life? Comparing yourself to others? Confused?
  - What does Jesus say to Peter?
- **What ground is God calling you to defend? What battle is He calling you to fight?**
  - What do you need to tackle head on? Defeat? Conquer? What are you and God doing together? What are you doing that only He can do?

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## Discussion Questions

1. Identify a Summit point in your life today... with the cross on one side, and the return of Christ in the distance on the other.
2. What is the temptation in settling in, and setting up camp in our mountain top experiences? Is being comfortable a bad thing?
3. Discuss, "salvation is not passive."
4. Read 2 Corinthians 4:7-10. How does this give us hope, in the middle of any and all of our crises?
5. How do we charge against the enemy — even with a limp and no ammunition? (*Ephesians 6:10-13.*)
6. What ground is God calling you to defend? What is He calling you to do, that only you and He can do together?

## NOTES