

spend time studying? Just think of the people I could reach for the Lord in the next 6 months if I know the Lord is coming after that time. ~~But~~ Well, he has not told us he is coming in six months. When the Lord comes, He wants to find everyone of us serving him and doing work for him now, but he wants us spending our life in such a way that if we live out our normal span of years we will accomplish the utmost then. Therefore if you neglect the future in order to spend all your time serving him now, that is not necessarily what will please him.

Because for all we know he might come today or tomorrow. But for all we know it might be another 1000 years before the Lord comes. I'm sure if anybody had said to St. Augustine in 400 A.D. that the Lord ~~w~~ won't come again for at least another 1500 years, Augustine would have said, What foolishness you're talking. Why it/s already 400 years! Another 1500 years, how ridiculous!

It might be another 1000years. We don't know. But it may be next year. And if he comes, will he find us now purifying ourselves in the light of this hope? Will he find that you are now serving him in such a way that when he comes he will say, you are a faithful servant who are accomplishing for me now. Will you be living now in such a way that if he comes, next week he will say, You were serving me now and preparing yourself in such a way that if I gave you 50 more years your life would then have accomplished the utmost for me.

It is important we note 1 John 3:14. We've already referred to 1 John 3 in its reference to the hope of our Lord's return and what it should mean to us as a purifying hope. Further on he speaks of the attitude we should have in v.13, "Do not be surprised my brothers if the world hate you. We know we have passed from death to life because we're standing so square for the gospel! Because we're so clear in our understanding of every little detail! No! Because we love our brethren. Anyone who does not love remains in death. Anyone who hates his brother is a murderer and we know that no murderer has eternal life in him."

Even in a group like this, if it/s similar to any group I've ever been in in the past, you'll find some who just have no use for certain others. I remember years ~~ago~~ ago in a seminary where I was and knew the students quite intimately because at that time not ~~xxxxxxx~~ they were no married and I ate meals with most of them regularly. I remember one who just had no use for this fellow over here; and another over there had no use for these over here. Both of them today have ~~x~~ stood for the Lord and serve him effectively. I think their service would be better if at that time they had harkened to the teaching of John and others that we are to love our brethren. We are to have love for all men, but we are to recognize other Christians if they differ from us in certain points of doctrine, if they differ from us in their actions in certain regards; if they even have a personality we just don't like, God calls us to love those who belong to the Lord Jesus Christ.