

Near

Scripture Reading — Romans 13:11-14

The night is nearly over; the day is almost here. — Romans 13:12

When we read passages like this one from Romans 13, we may well be puzzled by the writer's urgency, as though Christ's coming is just around the corner. How can we maintain such an air of expectancy today, two thousand years later?

It's been helpful to me to recognize how relative the word "near" is. I mean, if I told you my cousin is coming next summer, you probably wouldn't say, "That is near!" or "That's really soon!" But if I told you that my doctor said I was ill and would die next summer, you might well say, "Oh, that's near!" On the other hand, if the doctor told me I'd live till the year 2055, no one would say, "That's near!" But if scientists told us that the earth would disintegrate by 2055, the whole world would groan, "That is so near!"

Clearly, something is near if it makes an impact on the present. My cousin's visit has no effect on my plans today. But my death or the end of the world--well, that's another story. The coming of Christ, whenever it will be, is an event of such great significance that it affects us today.

Already now, its rays pierce our darkest days. Our salvation is near. So let us understand this present time as the opportunity to be clothed "with the Lord Jesus Christ, and ... not think about how to gratify the desires of the sinful nature."

Prayer

Gracious God, with the psalmist we pray that you will "teach us to number our days aright, that we may gain a heart of wisdom." In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

Devotion topics: [Christianity](#), [Discipleship](#)

Written by Jack Roeda — <https://today.reframemedia.com/authors/jack-roeda>

<https://today.reframemedia.com/devotions/near-2005-11-02>

Printed on December 3, 2020

