



Exhortations for the Future (1 Peter 4:7-11)

7The end of all things is near; therefore, be of sound judgment and sober *spirit* for the purpose of prayer. 8Above all, keep fervent in your love for one another, because love covers a multitude of sins. 9Be hospitable to one another without complaint. 10As each one has received a *special* gift, employ it in serving one another as good stewards of the manifold grace of God. 11Whoever speaks, *is to do so* as one who is speaking the utterances of God; whoever serves *is to do so* as one who is serving by the strength which God supplies; so that in all things God may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom belongs the glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen.
1 Peter 4:7-11

I. EXEGESIS

A. 4:7a – The End is Near [The end of all things is near]

1. Believed Christ's Return Imminent: Like the other apostles, Peter believed the return of Jesus Christ was imminent (i.e., it could occur at any moment; cf. James 5:8; Rom. 13:11; Heb. 9:28; 1 John 2:18). This fact should have made a practical difference in the way his readers lived. Eschatology has ethical implications (Constable)
 - a. "To charge Paul or Peter with false prophecy for saying 1900 years ago that the end is near, is to treat them unfairly. They, as we, had to live in constant expectation of Christ's sudden return." [243] (Lenski as found in Constable).
2. The End a Period of Time: "Peter's statement that "the end is near" is not precisely equivalent to saying that the end of the world will happen soon. While "the end" is certainly a future-oriented concept, Peter is not referring to one termination point in time. He rather has in mind the period of time after which Christ, who all along has been sovereign over all things, has finally been revealed as such in the resurrection. Peter's description of his readers in 5:10 as those who have been called into the age of God's glory in Christ corroborates the idea that a period, rather than point, of time is in view. An exclusively temporal interpretation has misled some to point out that Peter (and Jesus!) must have been wrong, since two thousand years later the world still goes on. " (Jobes)
 - a. "Peter is saying that because his readers are living in the last stage of a divinely initiated process, whose outcome has already been assured by the resurrection of Jesus Christ (1:3; 3:22), their behavior should reflect that reality. The end of all things is the basis for four exhortations that flesh out in practical terms the resources needed for the Christian community to be an alternate society in which its members may take refuge from the rejection of a hostile society. " (Jobes)

B. 4:7b – Prayers Importance [therefore, be of sound judgment and sober *spirit* for the purpose of prayer.]

1. "The first verb, "be self-controlled," is found also in the exhortation of Titus 2:6. The second, "be clear-minded" (npsate), contrasts with a drunken state in which one lacks self-control and in that sense can refer to sobriety. (Jobes)
2. Prayer is Primary: Our prayer life should be of a primary place and we should fight against fatalism
 - a. First priority is to be abiding prayer with Yeshua
3. Assessment: How is your prayer life? What has that looked like for the past month? What adjustments do you need to make?
4. Application: Three primary need - a schedule, vocabulary-from prayer lists & bible, and a right view of God

C. 4:8 – Above All, Love [Above all, keep fervent in your love for one another, because love covers a multitude of sins.]

1. In tribulation, love of many will grow cold: 12And because lawlessness will abound, the love of many will grow cold. 13But he who endures to the end shall be saved. Matthew 24:12-13
2. Our love for each other a sign to the world: 34A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; as I have loved you, that you also love one another. 35By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another." John 13:34-35
3. Above All:

4. *“Earnest”* implies an intent that is steadfastly pursued. “Earnest love” speaks not so much of emotional intensity but is, in this context, a love that persists despite difficulties because it is a love that also “covers a multitude of sins.” (Jobes)
 5. *Love’s Covering*: “love’s covering is put in antithetic parallelism to “hatred stirring up dissension and quarrels”: “Hatred stirs up dissension, but love covers over all wrongs” (Prov. 10:12 NIV). Since “hatred” is the antonym of “love,” the phrase “covers a multitude of sins” in this antithetic parallel suggests that the sense of “covering” and “stirring up dissension” are also opposites. If so, the love that covers sins is probably best understood as a forbearance that does not let wrongs done within the Christian community come to their fullest and most virulent expression.” (Jobes)
 - a. “As White (1919: 543, 546) explains, a person who is under the control of godly love acts, when a private personal injury has been done to him, as though nothing had occurred. In this way, by simply ignoring the unkind act or the insulting word, . . . he brings the evil thing to an end; it dies and leaves no seed.” (Jobes)
 - b. “Peter is not making a theological statement about sins being forgiven (“covered”) by God. Nor is he saying that sin in the church should be ignored or denied (“covered up”). Peter is concerned with behaviors that could destroy the Christian community; (Jobes)
 - c. “Clearly, living in community with other believers for a sustained period of time—especially in a hostile society—gives plenty of opportunity for such “sins” to occur that hurt members of the community, sow seeds of bad feelings, and fuel ongoing cycles of evil, deceit, hypocrisies, jealousies, and backbiting. This is why 4:8 calls not merely for love but for an earnest love that persistently continues to cover, to suppress, the potential for the destruction of the community. Such behavior actually extinguishes sin and its effects within the community by not retaliating in kind, thereby realizing in the context of community the claim of 4:1 that Christians must be through with sin.” (Jobes)
 6. *Assessment*: How are you doing on consistently loving those closest to you?
 7. *Application*: Who is the one person you find the hardest to love right now? What can you do to show love?
- D. 4:9 – Gracious Hospitality** [Be hospitable to one another without complaint.]
1. “Suggests a hospitality that functions within and among the local community of believers. If so, Peter may be expecting his readers to open their homes for the purpose of Christian worship and fellowship, since at that time the local church had to meet in the homes of its members. ” (Jobes)
 2. “It is this quality of openheartedness toward one another that is the basis for a Christian hospitality willing to minister to other believers even in the absence of warm feelings and even when relationships are strained” (Jobes)
 3. *Assessment*: When was the last time you had someone over to your home as an expression of love to God?
 4. *Application*: Who is the one person you can extend hospitality to?
- E. 4:10-11a – Gifts of Grace as Acts of Service** [10As each one has received a *special* gift, employ it in serving one another as good stewards of the manifold grace of God. 11Whoever speaks, *is to do so* as one who is speaking the utterances of God; whoever serves *is to do so* as one who is serving by the strength which God supplies; so that in all things God may be glorified through Jesus Christ]
1. *Using Your Gift of Grace*: “Peter implies that each Christian believer, by definition, has received a gift of God’s grace. That experience of grace is to be directed toward service to others” (Jobes)
 “Peter goes on to say that those who speak and those who serve should do so recognizing that they are stewards of the gift of God’s grace (4:11). “Speaking” and “serving” represent the whole of one’s activities.” (Jobes)
 “When the full range of activities in the Christian community is done with love, then in all things God is glorified through Jesus Christ. The unity and well-being of the community of people who bear Christ’s name are preserved; right living in the Christian community displays God’s redemptive plan, and therefore God is glorified through Jesus Christ.” (Jobes)
 2. *Assessment*: When was the last time you spoke, served, or used your gift to bless an aspect of the community?
 3. *Application*: What is one practical way you can use your gift to serve the body?

II. CLOSING THOUGHTS

A. Fishing (Name 2 fish you are praying for) & **Following** (what's one area of obedience to follow through on in the next week?)

III. BIBLIOGRAPHY

Constable, Thomas. *1 Peter Online Commentary*.

<https://www.planobiblechapel.org/tcon/notes/html/nt/1peter/1peter.htm>. 2021.

Jobs, Karen. *1 Peter*. Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament. 2005.

