

THEME: The End Is Near ... Are You Ready?

(1 PETER 4:7-11) 7 The end of all things is near; therefore, be of sound judgment and sober *spirit* for the purpose of prayer. 8 Above all, keep fervent in your love for one another, because love covers a multitude of sins. 9 Be hospitable to one another without complaint. 10 As each one has received a *special* gift, employ it in serving one another as good stewards of the manifold grace of God. 11 Whoever 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.

MAIN POINTS:

- I. The Return of Christ - (vs. 7a)
- II. The Ministry of Believers - (vs. 7b-11a)
 - (Prayer, Love, Hospitality, Speaking Ministry, and Serving Ministry)
- III. The Glory of God - (vs. 11b)

I. The Return of Christ - (v.7a)

- A. (v.7a) - "the end" - 'telos' - means: *consummation, fulfillment, a purpose attained*
- B. (v.7a) - "of all things" - refers to the return of Jesus Christ; not negative circumstances
- C. (v.7a) - "is near" - means: *approaching*
 - (c.f. 1 Peter 1:5; 1 Cor. 15:51-53; 1 Thess. 4:15-17; Revelation 1:3; Luke 12:35-40)
 - QUESTION: → "Are you ready for The Return of Christ?"

II. The Ministry of Believers - (v.7b-11a)

- D. (v.7b) - "sound judgment" - literally means: *be in one's right mind*
- E. (v.7b) - "sober spirit" - spiritually observant
- F. (v.7b) - "for the purpose of prayer" - The access point to all spiritual resources
- G. (v.8) - "Above all" - refers to the supreme virtue in the Christian life
- H. (v.8) - "keep fervent in your love" - refers to stretching or straining; athlete
- I. (v.8) - "for one another" - to other Christians in particular
- J. (v.8) - "love covers a multitude of sins" - "love" is *agape*
- K. (v.9) - "Be hospitable to one another" - literally: *to love strangers*

- L. (v.9) - "without complaint" - not just a selfless act of but unselfish attitude as well.
- M. (v.10) - "each one has received" - a gift from God; c.f. 1 Corinthians 12:4-11
- N. (v.10) - "a special gift" - "gift" is *charisma*; c.f. Romans 12:3-8
- O. (v.10) - "employ it in serving one another" - work it
- P. (v.10) - "as good stewards" - we don't own the gifts; we protect them with usage.
- Q. (v.10) - "the manifold grace of God" - means *many colored* or *multi-faceted*
- R. (v.11a) - SPEAKING —>
 - "whoever speaks" - teaching, wisdom, knowledge, discernment
 - "the utterances of God" - Scripture; not personal opinions
- S. (v.11a) - SERVING —>
 - "whoever serves" - administration, prayer, mercy, helps
 - "by the strength which God supplies" - not the flesh, but God's power!

III. The Glory of God - (v.11b)

- T. (v.11b) - "so that in all things" - how many things, exactly? - c.f. 1 Corinthians 10:31
- U. (v.11b) - "God may be glorified through Jesus Christ" - an expression of praise; doxology
- V. (v.11b) - "to whom belongs the glory and dominion" - to Jesus or God? (To both equally!)
- W. (v.11b) - "forever and ever" - how long, exactly?
- X. (v.11b) - "Amen" - 'let it be so' - Don't finish the prayer until you're convinced!

Discussion Questions:

1. Are you at all frightened or nervous about everything that is happening around our country and world at this time? Discuss why or why not.
2. Discuss why it is so important for Christians to be mindful of Christ's return, and how should this truth impact our thought life, our actions, and our evangelism efforts?
3. Grade yourself (and discuss) on how are you doing in the areas of Praying, Love, Hospitality, Speaking Ministry, and a Serving Ministry? (Grade Yourself: A, B, C, D, or F)
4. Discuss your spiritual gifts and if you think God wants you to be involved (or even more involved) in a Speaking or Serving ministry. (Do you know which area of ministry?)
5. Discuss how God is and/or can be glorified in everything that takes place in your life.