

“Living in the Last Days”

1 Peter 4:7-11

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I. Introduction

- A. Peter was writing to Christians who were facing a “fiery trial” (v. 12).
 - 1. Illustration- The fires in California. Urgency and priority
 - 2. “The end of all things was at hand” (v. 7).
 - 3. They needed to have a sense of urgency and priority
 - 4. Today, we are also facing “fiery trials” and “the end of things is at hand.”
- B. What does Peter mean by the statement “the end of things is at hand?”
 - 1. The consummation
 - 2. God stated that He will end it
 - 3. For the church, Christ’s coming is imminent
 - 4. How, then, should we spend our time?
 - a) With a sense of urgency and priority
 - b) 1 Peter is not only doctrinal, but it is very practical
 - c) “Be ye therefore” (v. 7)
- C. Peter gives us five commands on how to live in a hostile world

II. Be Sober (1 Peter 4:7)

- A. “Be ye sober” (v. 7)
 - 1. It’s an aorist imperative. An urgent and decisive action
 - 2. It was used for a person who was of sound mind. It means to be self-controlled and balanced in your reactions
 - a) Keep your mind steady and clear
 - b) William Barclay- “Preserve your sanity”
 - c) It’s the opposite of “mania” or “maniac”
 - d) In context- “The End of Time”
 - e) Don’t get imbalanced or freak out
 - f) Keep your cool
 - g) How? By prayer

III. Watch and Pray (1 Peter 4:7)

- A. “Watch and pray” (v. 7)
 - 1. “Be alert”

- a) It's the opposite of being "drunk" or "asleep."
- 2. Don't be intoxicated by the world's ideas or values
 - a) Be alert. Watch and pray
 - b) Illustration- Peter in the garden
- 3. Peter learned his lesson on how to pray
 - a) Illustration- (Acts 4)
 - 1) "Lord, you are God" (God's person)
 - 2) "Who by the mouth of thy servant David said" (God's promises)
 - 3) "Give us boldness to speak your Word" (God's power)
- 4. Jesus is coming. Don't fall asleep. Be alert and prayerful. Be clear-minded.

IV. Have Fervent Love (1 Peter 4:8)

- A. "Above all, keep fervent in your love (agape) for one another because love covers a multitude of sins." (Proverbs 10:12)
 - 1. As the world gets more hostile towards Christians, we need the love and fellowship of other believers
- B. Peter moves to relationships in the church community
 - 1. If there is one thing that should mark a Christian community, it is love
 - a) "Above all" (v. 8) or "all things"
 - b) Love is to have first place
 - 2. Love is to be "fervent" or "stretched out"
 - a) It pictures an athlete straining to reach the goal
 - b) We are to work hard at love
 - c) Give it all you've got. It's not easy
 - 3. Why should we have fervent love for one another?
 - a) "Because" or "for love covers a multitude of sins" (v. 8)
 - i. "Hatred stirs up strife, but love covers all sins" (Proverbs 10:12).
 - b) What does it mean that "love covers all sins?"
 - i. It doesn't mean love condones sin
 - ii. It means in love, we forgive and forget the sins people commit against us
 - iii. It is treating others the way God treats us
 - a. A cool head (v. 7)

- b. A prayerful heart (v. 7)
- c. A fervent love (v. 8)

V. Use Hospitality (1 Peter 4:9)

- A. Love opens its heart and its home
 - 1. Note its importance in Peter's day
 - 2. Also, for us today (spiritual leaders)
 - 3. Hospitality is literally "loving strangers."
 - 4. "Be not forgetful to entertain stranger for some..." (Hebrews 13:2)
 - a) Illustration- Abraham's tent
 - b) "without grudging" (v. 9)

VI. Use Your Gifts (1 Peter 4:10-11)

- A. Facts about Spiritual Gifts
 - 1. Every Christian has received at least one gift.
 - a) "Each one has received a gift" (v. 10).
 - b) It comes from the Holy Spirit (1 Corinthians 12:7)
 - 2. It's to be used to minister to others.
 - a) "Minister it to one another" (v. 10).
 - 3. We are to be good stewards (v. 10)
 - 4. They are grace gifts (v. 10)
 - 5. There are many different kinds of gifts.
 - a) (Romans 12)
 - b) (1 Corinthians 12)
 - c) (Ephesians 4)
 - d) (1 Peter 4)
 - e) Peter mentions two kinds of gifts.
 - 1) Speaking
 - a. "If anyone speaks, let him speak as the oracles of God" (v. 11).

2) Serving

- a. “If anyone ministers, let him do it as with the ability which God supplies” (v. 11).

6. The gifts are to be used to bless others and glorify God.

- a) “That in all things God may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom being the glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen” (v. 11).
- b) One day, we will hear, “Well done, good and faithful servant” (Matthew 25:21).

VII. Conclusion

A. How do we live in a hostile world?

1. Sober-minded prayer (v. 7)
2. Sincere love (v. 8)
3. Showing hospitality (v. 9)
4. Sharing your gifts (vv. 10-11)

B. Remember, the end of all things is at hand

1. Jesus is coming soon
2. No one knows when your time to die will come
3. Are you making the most of your time?