

# Living on the Edge of Eternity

Do you believe that Christ is coming back?

Then what should be our posture and purpose as we patiently wait for the sure and hope filled coming of our Lord?

In our passage today Peter lead of Christ Spirit calls us to 5 critical attitudes:

1. Be sober-minded
2. Watchful in prayer
3. To have earnest love for one another
4. Show hospitality
5. Serve in your giftedness

## Prayer

### **1 Peter 4:7-11 (ESV)**

The end of all things is at hand; therefore be self-controlled and sober-minded for the sake of your prayers. <sup>8</sup> Above all, keep loving one another earnestly, since love covers a multitude of sins. <sup>9</sup> Show hospitality to one another without grumbling. <sup>10</sup> As each has received a gift, use it to serve one another, as good stewards of God's varied grace: <sup>11</sup> whoever speaks, as one who speaks oracles of God; whoever serves, as one who serves by the strength that God supplies—in order that in everything God may be glorified through Jesus Christ. To him belong glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen.

So Peter wants us to know our suffering will end, we are going to be freed from all the sufferings and trials of this corruptible and evil world. And not only this but the fulfillment of our faith will take place soon. We are going to see Jesus face to face and be given the glorious privilege of living with Him forever.

Early believers anticipated Christ to return in their lifetime.

### **Romans 13:12 (ESV)**

The night is far gone; the day is at hand. So then let us cast off the works of darkness and put on the armor of light.

We must all live in anticipation of Christ's coming.

### **1 Peter 4:7 (ESV)**

The end of all things is at hand; therefore be self-controlled and sober-minded for the sake of your prayers.

Believers are to have clear thinking, we are to take Christ's return seriously. Persecution and suffering battles against clear-mindedness, self-control is difficult when we face injustice. We are reminded here that our time is short and our reward is sure, so we must keep clear minds and maintain self-control so that we can pray.

### **Matthew 26:41 (ESV)**

Watch and pray that you may not enter into temptation. The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak."

### **1 Peter 4:7 (NIV)**

The end of all things is near. Therefore be clear minded and self-controlled so that you can pray.

**1 Peter 4:7 (AMP)**

But the end *and* culmination of all things has now come near; keep sound minded *and* self-restrained and alert therefore for [the practice of] prayer.

Sober-minded means to keep your mind steady and clear. It was a warning against wild thinking about prophecy that could lead to an unbalanced life and ministry. Often we hear of sincere people who get out of balance because of an unbiblical emphasis on prophecy or a misinterpretation of scripture. There are people who set dates for Christ's return contrary to His warning.

**Matthew 25:13 (ESV)**

Watch therefore, for you know neither the day nor the hour.

**Acts 1:6-8 (ESV)**

So when they had come together, they asked him, “Lord, will you at this time restore the kingdom to Israel?” <sup>7</sup> He said to them, “It is not for you to know times or seasons that the Father has fixed by his own authority. <sup>8</sup> But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth.”

The antonym of sober-minded is crazed.

*When it comes to Christ's return we need to move from the planning committee to the welcoming committee.*

Peter's emphasis on hope and the glory of God should encourage us to be faithful today in whatever work God has given us to do.

**Big Idea**

*If you want to make the best use of the rest of your time, live in the light of the return of Jesus.*

**1 Thessalonians 5:6 (ESV)**

So then let us not sleep, as others do, but let us keep awake and be sober.

*Lack of prayer will render us unprepared for the end times.*

**1 Peter 4:8 (ESV)**

Above all, **keep** loving one another earnestly, since love covers a multitude of sins.

When believers experience deep love from and for the body, they have the human network of support that can help them through any crisis.

**John 13:34-35 (ESV)**

A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another: just as I have loved you, you also are to love one another. <sup>35</sup> By this all people will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another.”

Especially in times of testing and persecution, Christians need to love one another and be united in heart.

This love should be earnest – sincere and fervent. The word pictures an athlete straining to reach the goal. It speaks of eagerness and intensity.

**Romans 5:8 (ESV)**

but God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

**Proverbs 10:12 (ESV)**

Hatred stirs up strife, but love covers all offenses.

Love does not excuse sin, for if we love we will be grieved to see their sin that hurts them and others. Rather, love covers sin in that love motivates us to hide the sin from others and not spread it. Where there is hatred, there is malice and malice causes a person to want to tear down the reputation of his enemy. This leads to gossip and slander.

*Ultimately love takes a protective posture!*

Genesis 9 gives us a beautiful illustration of this principle. Noah got drunk and shamefully uncovered himself. His son Ham saw his father's shame and told the matter to the family. In loving concern, Ham's two brothers covered their father and his shame.

As followers of Christ we should forgive the faults in others' lives because we have experienced God's gracious forgiveness in our own.

**1 Peter 4:9-11a (ESV)**

Show hospitality to one another without grumbling. <sup>10</sup> As each has received a gift, use it to serve one another, as good stewards of God's varied grace: <sup>11</sup> whoever speaks, as one who speaks oracles of God; whoever serves, as one who serves by the strength that God supplies—in order that in everything God may be glorified through Jesus Christ.

We should share our homes with others in generous (and uncomplaining) hospitality, and we should use our spiritual gifts in service to one another.

Being hospitable is different from socially entertaining. Entertaining focuses on the host—the home must be spotless; the food must be well prepared and abundant; the host must appear relaxed and happy. Hospitality, in contrast, focuses on the guests. Their needs—a place to stay, nourishing food, a listening ear, or acceptance—those are the primary concerns. Hospitality can happen in a messy home. It can happen around a dinner table where the main dish is canned soup. It can even happen while the host and the guest are doing chores together. Believers should not hesitate to offer hospitality. Hospitality is a strong expression of love!

Jesus also gave us a motivation check: we should not open our homes to others just so that others will invite us over. We should do it to glorify the Lord.

And Finally, Christian love must result in service. Each Christian has at least one spiritual gift that they must use to the glory of God and the building up of the church.

How long is "the rest of your time on earth"? Don't waste it! Invest it by doing the will of God.

**Closing Prayer**