

Living in Light of the End

1 Peter 4:7-11

Chase Fluhart

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I. Introduction

Our text this morning gives us clear instructions in how we ought to act when we approach the end of all things. Whether we take this as the end of ordinary life as we know it, or the ultimate end of all things at the coming of Christ—Peter tells us how we ought to live. And his answer is simple. He says, in short, act like the _____, act like the Household of God.

II. Text, 1 Peter 4.7-11

7 But the end of all things is at hand; therefore be serious and watchful in your prayers. 8 And above all things have fervent love for one another, for “love will cover a multitude of sins.” 9 Be hospitable to one another without grumbling. 10 As each one has received a gift, minister it to one another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God. 11 If anyone speaks, let him speak as the oracles of God. If anyone ministers, let him do it as with the ability which God supplies, that in all things God may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom belong the glory and the dominion forever and ever. Amen.

III. “The end of all things is at hand. . .”

This expectation of some imminent in-breaking of God in the world _____ all NT teaching (cf. 1 Cor. 7:29; Jam. 5:8; 1 Jn. 2:18; Rom. 13:12; Heb. 10:25; Matt. 24:13). Without grasping this, you can hardly understand the Christian life described in the NT.

While there is an undeniable ‘imminency’ to the NT, there is also an _____ in terms of what the exact timeline will be. The NT speaks of a more local and _____ ‘end of all things’, and it speaks of an _____ end of all things. The more immediate ‘end’ was fulfilled in AD 70 at the destruction of _____ (cf. the ‘Olivet Discourse’, in Matt. 24, Mk. 13, Lk. 24). But we also read of a more distant end of all things—a more ultimate end of all things (cf. 2 Pet. 3; Rev. 20:11-ch. 22; 2 Thess. 1-2). In regards to this ultimate end, the apostles did not pretend to know when it would be. The Lord operates on His own _____, for, “with the Lord one day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day” (2 Pet. 3:8).

IV. What does this mean for us?

First, this means we should be careful about _____ these two senses in our own reading of the times. We have to “rightly divide the word of truth” (2 Tim. 2:15). The apostles faced the ‘end of all things’ in their own time, and yet they distinguished this from the ultimate ‘end of all things’.

Second, this means that whether we stand before our own ‘end of all things’, as in the end of _____ as we know it; or, if we simply find ourselves on this side of _____, this side of the ultimate end of all things—our marching orders remain the _____.

V. Act Like the Church

The end of all things is at hand, therefore. . .

Be _____ and _____ in your prayers, v. 7.

— Be aware of what you're pursuing, what trajectory you're flying on. Is it one you can ask the Lord to bless? — is it one that you do ask the Lord to bless? Or, are you wasting the time that He's given you by pursuing useless or evil things?

Above all things have _____ for one another, for "love will cover a multitude of sins," v. 8.

— This kind of love is a distinctly _____ love. It is love, not love for what is attractive, for what is beautiful and lovely in and of itself. Christian love loves in spite of unloveliness because it loves in spite of _____. It is a love that covers over a _____ of sins. This is how Christ loved us.

— Rom. 5:8, "*God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.*"

— Lk. 6:32-33, "*But if you love those who love you, what credit is that to you? For even sinners love those who love them. 33 And if you do good to those who do good to you, what credit is that to you? For even sinners do the same.*"

Be _____ to one another without _____, v. 9.

— The end of all things is at hand, and these are the people you're going to weather the storm with, these are the people you're going to live with _____ in the new heavens and the new earth—get to know them. Love them. Welcome them into your homes.

As each one has received a gift, _____ to one another, as good _____ of the manifold grace of God, v. 10.

— Your talents, abilities, positions, and strength are gifts from the grace of God, and you are stewards of them. God did not give them to you so that you can serve _____. He did not give them to you so that you can _____ in them. He gave them to you so that you would _____ the Church, and He expects a return. He expects you to turn a profit. He expects you to bring a blessing to His Church with them.

VI. Conclusion

This is the way we face the end—the end, which is for the Church always a _____ thing. The end of temporal things should not bring dismay, but joy for what the Lord is doing. All of creation, all of history is rushing toward the new heavens and the new earth. When God shakes the earth, He shakes what is shakeable so that only what cannot be _____ might remain (Heb. 12:26-27). And what is permanent is His everlasting Kingdom that knows no end but will, because of the blood of Christ, inherit all things—and all things made *new*, not all things infected by sin and bound to futility. We will inherit all things made new, all things resurrected, all things made glorious. Forever.