

# Exegetical Notes for 1 Peter 4:7-11

## KEY

**ACC** = Ancient Christian Commentary on Scripture: New Testament XI (Gerald Bray, Ed.)

**ATR** = Word Pictures in the New Testament (A.T. Robertson).

**BAG** = Bauer Arndt and Gingrich: A Greek-English Lexicon to the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature.

**BKBC** = Bible Knowledge Background Commentary: John, Hebrews - Revelation (Craig A. Evans, Gen. Ed.).

**B&W** = Syntax of New Testament Greek (James A. Brooks and Carlton Winbery).

**Barclay** = The Letters of James and Peter: Daily Study Bible Series (William Barclay).

**Bullinger** = Figures of Speech Used in the Bible (E.W. Bullinger).

**Calvin** = Calvin's Commentaries, Vol. XXII (John Calvin).

**DNTT** = The New International Dictionary of New Testament Theology (Colin Brown, Gen. Ed.).

**Fickett** = Peter's Principles: A Bible Commentary for Laymen (Harold L. Fickett, Jr.).

**Grudem** = Tyndale New Testament Commentaries, 1 Peter (Wayne Grudem).

**Grudem2** = Systematic Theology (Wayne Grudem).

**Guthrie** = New Testament Introduction (Donald Guthrie).

**Expositors** = The Expositor's Greek New Testament: Volume Five (W. Robertson Nicoll, Ed.).

**Keener** = The IVP Bible Background Commentary: New Testament (Craig S. Keener).

**Leighton** = 1 & 2 Peter: The Crossway Classic Commentaries (Robert Leighton).

**Lewis** = Integrative Theology (Gordon Lewis and Bruce Demarest).

**MacArthur** = MacArthur New Testament Commentary: 1 Peter (John MacArthur).

**Maclaren** = Expositions of Holy Scripture: 1 Peter (Alexander Maclaren).

**Metzger** = A Textual Commentary on the Greek New Testament (Bruce M. Metzger).

**Michaels** = 1 Peter Word Biblical Commentary (J. Ramsey Michaels).

**Morgan** = The Westminster Pulpit (Volume VIII) (G. Campbell Morgan).

**NLEKGNT** = New Linguistic and Exegetical Key to the Greek New Testament.

**Schreiner** = The New American Commentary: 1, 2 Peter, Jude (Thomas R. Schreiner).

**Shedd** = Dogmatic Theology (W.G.T. Shedd), 3<sup>rd</sup> edition.

**Kittle** = Theological Dictionary of the New Testament (G. Kittle and G. Friedrich, Eds.).

**Turnbull** = Proclaiming the New Testament: Volume 5 (Ralph Turnbull, Ed.).

**Vincent** = Vincent's Word Studies of the New Testament (Marvin R. Vincent).

**Wuest** = First Peter in the Greek New Testament (Kenneth S. Wuest).

### Basic Diagram of 4:7-11

7 Πάντων δε το τέλος ἤγγικεν,  
οὖν  
σωφρονήσατε  
και ==> εἰς προσευχάς·  
νήψατε  
8 προ πάντων ==> τὴν εἰς ἑαυτοὺς ἀγάπην ἐκτενὴ ἔχοντες,  
(ὅτι ἀγάπη καλύπτει πλῆθος ἁμαρτιῶν.)  
9 φιλόξενοι εἰς ἀλλήλους  
ἄνευ γογγυσμοῦ,  
10 ἕκαστος καθὼς ἔλαβεν χάρισμα  
εἰς ἑαυτοὺς αὐτὸ διακονοῦντες  
ὡς καλοὶ οἰκονόμοι ποικίλης χάριτος θεοῦ.  
11 εἷ τις λαλεῖ,  
ὡς λόγια θεοῦ·  
εἷ τις διακονεῖ,  
ὡς ἐξ ἰσχύος ἧς χορηγεῖ ὁ θεός,  
ἵνα ἐν πᾶσιν δοξάζεται ὁ θεός  
δια  
Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ,  
ὃ ἐστίν  
ἡ δόξα  
καὶ  
τὸ κράτος  
εἰς  
τοὺς αἰῶνας τῶν αἰώνων,  
ἀμην.

7 **The end of all things has come near;**

therefore,

be of sound and sober sound mind

for the purpose of prayer.

8

**Above all,**

remain fervent

in your LOVE for one another,

((for LOVE covers a multitude of sins.))

9

Be hospitable to **one another,**

*without complaint.*

10

As each one has received a spiritual gift,

use it to serve **one another**

as good stewards

of the manifold grace of God.

11

If anyone speaks,

[let him speak] as the utterances of God;

if anyone serves,

[let him serve] out of the strength supplied by God;

so that in everything

God may be glorified

*through Jesus Christ.*

To Him be the glory and power forever and ever.

Amen!

## TRANSLATION, OUTLINE AND CENTRAL PROPOSITION

### GREEK TEXT:

<sup>7</sup> Πάντων δε το τέλος ἤγγικεν. σωφρονήσατε οὖν και νήψατε εἰς προσευχάς· <sup>8</sup> προ πάντων τήν εἰς ἑαυτοὺς ἀγάπην ἐκτενῆ ἔχοντες, ὅτι ἀγάπη καλύπτει πλῆθος ἁμαρτιῶν. <sup>9</sup> φιλόξενοι εἰς ἀλλήλους ἄνευ γογγυσμοῦ, <sup>10</sup> ἕκαστος καθὼς ἔλαβεν χάρισμα εἰς ἑαυτοὺς αὐτὸ διακονοῦντες ὡς καλοὶ οἰκονόμοι ποικίλης χάριτος θεοῦ. <sup>11</sup> εἴ τις λαλεῖ, ὡς λόγια θεοῦ· εἴ τις διακονεῖ, ὡς ἐξ ἰσχύος ἧς χορηγεῖ ὁ θεός, ἵνα ἐν πᾶσιν δοξάζεται ὁ θεὸς δια Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ, ὃ ἐστὶν ἡ δόξα καὶ τὸ κράτος εἰς τοὺς αἰῶνας τῶν αἰώνων, ἀμήν.

### ENGLISH TRANSLATION:

**7 The end of all things has come near; therefore, be of sound and sound mind for the purpose of prayer. 8 Above all, remain fervent in your love for one another, for love covers a multitude of sins. 9 Be hospitable to one another, without complaint. 10 As each one has received a [spiritual] gift, use it to serve one another as good stewards of the manifold grace of God. 11 If anyone speaks, [let him speak] as the utterances of God; if anyone serves, [let him serve] out of the strength supplied by God; so that in everything God may be glorified through Jesus Christ. To Him be the glory and power forever and ever. Amen!**

### PASSAGE OUTLINE:

- I. The end of all things has come near
  - A. Be Serious
  - B. Be Prayerful
  - C. Be Loving
  - D. Be Hospitable
  - E. Be Serving
  - F. Be Worshipful

### INITIAL SERMON OUTLINE:

- I. Our Motivation
  - A. To focus on the consummation of all things
- II. Our Mission
  - A. To be serious about prayer
  - B. To be selfless in our love
    - 1. To be fervent in our love for each other
    - 2. To be hospitable in our love for each other
    - 3. To be selfless in our serving on another
- III. Our Mandate
  - A. to see that God is glorified in all we do

**PASSAGE SUBJECT/THEME (what is the passage talking about):**

Living with a healthy expectancy of Christ's return . . .

**PASSAGE COMPLEMENT/THRUST (what is the passage saying about what it's talking about):**

. . . moves us to prayer, love and service to the glory of God.

**PASSAGE MAIN IDEA (central proposition of the text):**

Living with a healthy expectancy of Christ's return should motivate the Christian to pray, love and serve unto the glory of God.

**PURPOSE OF THE SERMON (on the basis of the CPT what does God want us to learn and do?):**

To excel far more in thinking about the return of Christ as our hope in the midst of suffering and to focus on prayer, love, and service to God's glory.

**SERMON SUBJECT/THEME (what am I talking about):**

Christian living focused the hope of Christ's return...

**SERMON COMPLEMENT/THRUST (what am I saying about what I am talking about):**

...demonstrates itself in prayer, love and service to the glory of God.

**INITIAL CENTRAL PROPOSITION OF THE SERMON:**

Let's fuse our minds on the hope of Christ's return so that we may excel far more in prayer and love for the glory of our God.

**MEMORABLE CENTRAL PROPOSITION OF THE SERMON:**

A mind fused on Christ's coming is focused on persevering in prayer, practicing love, and pursuing God's praise.

**SERMONIC IDEA/TITLE:**

Between a Hard Place and The Rock: Living in Light of Christ's Coming

## **FINAL SERMON OUTLINE:**

### **I. What is our Motivation? (7a)**

- A. To Live in Light of Christ's Coming

### **II. What is our Mission? (7b-11a)**

- A. To be Serious about Prayer (7b)

- B. To be Selfless in our Love (8-11a)

1. The Priority of Our Love: It is First (8a)
2. The Nature of Our Love: It is Innate (8a)
3. The Depth of Our Love: It is Fervent (8b)
4. The Effect of Our Love: It is Forgiving (8c)
5. The Practice of Our Love: It is Hospitable (9a)
6. The Attitude of Our Love: It is Cheerful (9b)
7. The Fruit of Our Love: It is Serving (10-11a)
  - a. The nature of the gift is that is spiritual and by grace
  - b. The recipient of the gift is that it is to "each one"
  - c. The definition of the gift is God Given Abilities to minister to others
  - d. The object of the gift is outward, directed toward others
  - e. Responsibility of the gift - stewardship from God

### **III. What is our Mandate? (11b)**

- A. That in everything God be glorified

## **HISTORICAL/CULTURAL/GRAMMATICAL CONTEXT**

The nature of this text indicates that Peter is winding down his letter. Note the doxology in verse 11 ending with "amen" that is repeated at the close of the letter in 5:11.

Peter has spent much time (2:11 to 4:6) in instructing us how we are to relate to a hostile world. He now returns (cf. 1:22) to instructions on how believers are to treat each other. The shift goes from "loving your enemy" to "love one another." This love and appeal to unity is in light of "the end of all things" and continued persecution and difficulty (cf. 4:12 ff.).





### Three Steps of Exegesis

- ❶ Do an initial translation of the entire passage.
- ❷ Do a detailed analysis of the grammar, working verse-by-verse to the end of the passage.
- ❸ Do a detailed exegesis of the passage by way of a "shot-gun" approach, using all the exegetical tools.
  - √ In no particular order:
    - Work from critical commentaries to practical.
    - Word studies and cross-references (analogy of the faith).
    - Applicational analysis - applicational issues arising from the text.
    - Theological analysis - theological issues arising from the text.
  - √ "Blast away" at the passage until I am content with my exegesis, main idea, and outline.
    - Smooth away all of the wrinkles.
    - The process is to yield an accurate "statue" as I chisel away the debris.

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### Parsing Verbs and Declining Nouns

- Verbs: (ἑπακολουθεω - to follow \* Verb: Aorist Subjunctive Active, 2P).  
(ὑπομεινω \* Verb: Future Indicative Active, 2P).
- Nouns: (ὑπογραμμος - model, pattern, example \* Noun: Masculine Accusative Singular).
- Participles: (ἔχοντες \* Participle: Present Active, Masculine Nominative Plural).
- Adjectives: (ἐπιεικης - gentle, kind \* Adjective: Masculine Dative Plural).
- Pronouns: (ἐγω - I \* First Person Independent Personal Pronoun: Nominative Singular).  
(συ - to or for you \* Second Person Independent Personal Pronoun: Dative Plural).  
(αὐτος \* Third Person Independent Personal Pronoun: Masculine Genitive Singular).  
(τουτο - this \* Near Demonstrative Pronoun: Neuter Nominative Singular).

## 4:7 EXEGESIS

### GREEK TEXT:

Πάντων δε το τέλος ἤγγικεν. σωφρονήσατε οὖν και νήψατε εἰς προσευχάς·

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Πάντων δε (πας, πασα, παν -- \* Adjective). --

το τέλος (τέλος -- \* Noun: Neuter Nominative Singular). Subject Nominative.

ἤγγικεν. (ἐγγιζω - to approach, come near \* Verb: Perfect Indicative Active, 3S). Consummative Perfect.

σωφρονήσατε (σωφρονεω - to be serious, sensible, sober-minded \* Verb: First Aorist Imperative Active, 2P). Imperative of Command. Ingressive Aorist.

οὖν και νήψατε (νήψω - to be sober \* Verb: First Aorist Imperative Active, 2P). Imperative of Command. Ingressive Aorist.

εἰς προσευχάς (προσευχη -- \* Noun: Feminine Accusative Plural). Accusative of purpose (with the preposition εἰς).

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### ENGLISH TRANSLATION:

**The end of all things has come near; therefore, be of sound and sober mind for the purpose of prayer.**

### CONTEXTUAL, GRAMMATICAL, THEOLOGICAL, APPLICATIONAL ANALYSIS:

**The end of all things has come near;** (Πάντων δε το τέλος ἤγγικεν.)

ἤγγικεν. (ἐγγιζω - to approach, come near \* Verb: Perfect Indicative Active, 3S). Consummative Perfect. This is a word that is consistently used in connection with the coming of Christ and his kingdom. Cf. Matt. 3:2; Mark 1:15; Luke 10:9; **James 5:8; Heb. 10:25; 2 Peter 3:10; 1 John 2:18-19.**

το τέλος (τέλος -- \* Noun: Neuter Nominative Singular). Subject Nominative. Does not necessarily indicate a cessation, or termination, or even a chronological conclusion. It can also refer to a consummation or a fulfillment of a goal or purpose.

What he's referring to is the consummation of all things that will be ushered in with the return of Christ.

See also Romans 13:8 ff.;

Note the consistent message of it being the last hour, the Lord being at hand, etc. How do we interpret that in light of the first century audience?

But what does this mean? Was Peter thinking of Christ's second coming (cannot be or he would have erred) or something else such as Jerusalem's destruction or the impending intensification of persecution?

Note the perfect tense. Something that happened in the past that continues to effect the present. What is the connection to the word "has?" Was it an event? ==> Coming of Christ, his life, death, burial, resurrection, and ascension. (Acts 1:5). All eschatology begins at the cross. With Christ's establishing His church and the coming of the Holy Spirit has come an age of eschatology. There is an undated period of time that the householder has gone and he will return - but we know not when. There is an immanence. Note the Thessalonian controversy. Note Christ's parables to this effect.

Grudem writes:

*"The end of all things is at hand* means that all the major events in God's plan of redemption have occurred, and now all things are ready for Christ to return and rule. Rather than thinking of world history in terms of earthly kings and kingdoms, Peter thinks in terms of 'redemptive history.' From that perspective all the previous acts in the drama of redemption have been completed - creation, fall, the calling of Abraham, the exodus from Egypt, the kingdom of Israel, the exile in Babylon and the return, the birth of Christ, his life, death and resurrection, his ascension into heaven, and the pouring out of the Holy Spirit to establish the church. The great 'last act,' the church age, had been continuing for about 30 years by the time Peter wrote. Thus the curtain could fall at any time, ushering in the return of Christ and the end of the age. All things are ready: *the end of all things* (the 'goal' to which 'all' these events have been leading) *is at hand.*" [Grudem, 172-73]

In Noah's days they forgot, and the flood came. In Lot's days also sinners were destroyed; and our Lord solemnly warned us that, as it was in the days of Noah and of Lot, it will be again. Paul puts it: "When they are saying, Peace and safety, then sudden destruction cometh upon them" (1 Thess 5:3). Our Lord charged us also in Luke 21:34-36: "But take heed to yourselves, lest haply your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting, and drunkenness, and cares of this life, and that day come on you suddenly as a snare: for so shall it come upon all them that dwell on the face of all the earth. But watch ye at every season, making supplication, that ye may prevail to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of man. . . . In our text, "the end of all things is at hand," we must consider a double truth: (1) There is a necessary end to human things in that they are poisoned with sin and cannot escape self-ruin. (2) There is also (and in this verse we have chosen, it is the chief announcement) a divine ending of all things by judgment. In the "end of all things" what is chiefly before Peter's mind is that sudden, unexpected, inescapable intervention at Christ's second coming described in 2 Thessalonians 1 and Revelation 19. [William R. Newell, "The End of All Things Is at Hand," BSac 109:435 (Jul 52) pp. 249ff]

Impending nature to Christ's return. Cf. Matt. 24:37-39; Rom. 13:12; 1 Thess. 5:2.

The other side of this is the fact that our death is always immanent. Christ's return may be impending; our death is immanent. No guarantees no matter how healthy, how young. While I don't think that this is what Peter is referring to, I do think it's a consideration.

Theology of watchfulness. Matt. 24:42-44 (note the significance of 70 AD); Mark 13:35-37; Luke 12:35-40; 21:36; 1 Cor. 1:7; 1 Tim. 6:14; Titus 2:13; Heb. 10:25.

Note 1 Thess. 4:15-17 and the perversion of Paul's teaching that he corrects in 2 Thess. There has to be a balanced expectancy. If we knew the exact time, we would become complacent. Or if the exact time was near, we would rush around like we were meeting some sort of deadline.

Robert Leighton (197-98):

"We need to be reminded about this often, for even believers are all too ready to forget it. The general goal of everything 'is near', even though many generations have passed since the apostle wrote this. We must note first, that the apostles usually speak about the whole time after the coming of Jesus Christ in the flesh as the last time. Among the Jews there is an ancient tradition that the duration of the world would correspond with the six days of creation, a day being with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day. They divided the whole into three periods--2,000 years before the Law, 2,000 years under the Law, and 2,000 years under the Gospel. The seventh period was to be the Sabbath of Sabbaths, the blessed rest of eternity. It seems from various expressions that the apostles thought 'the end' was not far off. Thus St. Paul says, 'After that, we who are still alive and are left will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air' (1 Thess. 4:17). He speaks as if it was not impossible that might come about in their time.

Second, we note that this might always have been said. In comparison with eternity, the whole duration of the world is not considerable. And to the eternal Lord who made it, and has appointed its period, a thousand years are but as a day. We think 1,000 years a great matter when compared with our short life. But what is the greatest length of time when compared with eternity?

Third, we see that for each person 'the end of things is near.' When we die, the world ends for us. This consideration fits the subject and helps the argument. Seeing all things will quickly come to an end, even the frame of heaven and earth, why should we, knowing this and having higher hopes, spend so much of our energies on those things that are passing away? It is not difficult to understand that we should be sober and watchful and prayerful, since we exist for such a short time. Why should our hearts cling to those things from which we will soon be separated? 'The end of all things is near.' An end of a few poor delights and the many vexations of this wretched life will soon come. Then temptations and sin and the worst of all evils will be at an end as well. Even prayer petitions themselves will end and will be replaced with a new song of endless praise."

"But it may be objected and said, that a long series of ages has passed away since Peter wrote this, and yet that the end is not come. My reply to this is, that the time seems long to us, because we measure its length by the spaces of this fleeting life; but if we could understand the perpetuity of future life, many ages would appear to us like a moment, as Peter will also tell us in his second epistle. Besides, we must remember this principle, that from the time when Christ once appeared, there is nothing left for the faithful, but with suspended minds ever to look forward to his second coming." [Calvin]

As a footnote to Calvin's quote, the editor writes: "There is no ground to suppose, as Hammond, Macknight, and some others have supposed, that "the end of all things" was the end of the Jews as a nation, the destruction of the temple and its worship. And it is strange that such a notion should be entertained, especially when we consider that the Apostle refers to the same subject in his Second Epistle, where the end of the world is plainly spoken of. — Ed."

It is nonetheless worth pondering that perhaps something be said for a view to AD 70, even if this be as a preview of the end times.

Adam Clarke:

"But the end of all things is at hand. I think that here also St. Peter keeps the history of the deluge before his eyes, finding a parallel to the state of the Jews in his own time in that of the antediluvians in the days of Noah. In Genesis 6:13, God said unto Noah, The end of all flesh is come before me. This was spoken at a time when God had decreed the destruction of the world by a flood. Peter says, The end of all things is at hand; and this he spoke when God had determined to destroy the Jewish people and their polity by one of the most signal judgments that ever fell upon any nation or people. In a very few years after St. Peter wrote this epistle, even taking it at the lowest computation, viz., A. D. 60 or 61, Jerusalem was destroyed by the Romans. To this destruction, which was literally then at hand, the apostle alludes when he says, The end of all things is at hand; the end of the temple, the end of the Levitical priesthood, the end of the whole Jewish economy, was then at hand. If these words could be taken in any general sense, then we might say to every present generation, The end of all things is at hand; the end of all the good which the wicked enjoy, and the end of all the evil which the righteous suffer."

John Gill:

"With respect to particular persons, the end of life, and which is the end of all things in this world to a man, is near at hand; which is but as an hand's breadth, passes away like a tale that is told, and is but as a vapour which appears for a while, and then vanishes away. Or this may be said with regard to the Jews, the end of their church and civil state was near at hand, of their sacrifices, temple, city, and nation; or with respect to the whole universe, to the scheme and fashion of this world, which will soon be gone, though the substance will abide; when the heavens shall pass away, and the earth and all therein will be burnt up; when there will be an end of all the purposes and promises of God respecting the present state of things concerning his church and people, and of the judgments of God upon his enemies here; when the man of sin will be destroyed, and the wickedness of the wicked will be come to an end, and the sorrows, afflictions, and persecutions of the saints, will be no more; and when will be an end put to the present dispensation of things; there will be an end of the ministry of the word, and of the administration of ordinances; time will be no more, and the final state of both good and bad men will take place: this may be said to be at hand in the apostle's time, though so long ago, because that was the last time, and the last dispensation of things; and whereas they knew not the exact time when it would be, they frequently spoke of it as near, in order to stir up the saints to the more diligent discharge of duty, and fervent exercise of grace, as here: be ye therefore sober, or "temperate", as the Arabic version renders it . . ."

**therefore, be of sound and sober mind for the purpose of prayer.** (σωφρονήσατε οὖν και νήψατε εἰς προσευχάς·)

"Be-sober, and watch unto prayer. Be sober — make a prudent and moderate use of all you possess; and watch against all occasions of sin; and pray for the supporting hand of God to be upon you for good, that ye may escape the destruction that is coming upon the Jews, and that ye may be saved from among them when the scourge comes." [Adam Clarke]

σωφρονήσατε (σωφρονεω - to be serious, sensible, sober-minded \* Verb: First Aorist Imperative Active, 2P). Imperative of Command. Ingressive Aorist. Lit. "of a sound mind." Translated "to be in the right mind" in Mark 5:15. Some have translated the word "sane". "To preserve one's sanity."

Be sane -

"The great characteristic of sanity is that it sees things in their proper proportions; it sees what things are important and what are not; it is not swept away by sudden and transitory enthusiasms; it is prone neither to unbalanced fanaticism, nor to unrealized indifference. It is only when we see the affairs of earth in light of eternity that we see them in their proper proportions; it is when God is in his proper place that everything takes its proper place." [Barclay, 251]

οὖν και νήψατε (νήψω - to be sober \* Verb: First Aorist Imperative Active, 2P). Imperative of Command. Ingressive Aorist. Watchful? Same word used in 1:13.

Carries the idea of self-control and clarity of mind. "To be calm and collected in spirit, to be temperate, dispassionate, circumspect . . . able to see things without the distortion caused by worry, fear, and other related attitudes." [Wuest, 35]

Literally it is used in opposition to drunkenness. Here it is used figuratively of the mind. Having a sober mind as opposed to a drunk mind (a mind that is inebriated with apathy, laziness, error, immaturity, etc.). Note how alcohol affects the person and mind negatively (my first experience w/drunkenness). Lack of spiritual mental-focus does much the same.

Such an attitude of mind stands in juxtaposition to that found in vv. 3-5.

These are to mark our lives and our thoughts. What of those who just don't appear able to do so? Those that are "carried away by every wind of doctrine?"

But this is for a purpose, here. For prayer. Note how our prayer lives and our prayer content will be revolutionized when we adopt the right attitudes.

Our prayers are so often trivial. We pray for someone who has the sniffles and for another who wants to win a ballgame and for someone else to have a fun day out with the kids (and good weather). We don't pray as we ought! (cf. James).

Our prayers would be transformed in intensity and content if we were living in light of Christ's any moment return. "Christ could come tomorrow, my husband is lost. Oh, how I want him to know the truth and be saved!" The end of all things might be any moment. "We need to reach the lost with the gospel! We need more time to love one another, to glorify our God."

Urgency -

"When time is short, things get urgent. And simplified. Something about the brevity of time introduces both urgency and simplicity to the equation of life. When a friend or family member tells you he or she hasn't long to live, your time together becomes more urgent and your discussions return to the basics. When a hurricane is blowing in or the black funnel of a tornado looms on the horizon, you don't pull out a Monopoly game or begin preparing a gourmet meal. It's all about survival and survival calls for simplicity." [Swindoll, Hope Again, 181]

Simplicity brings us back to the basics - another theme of 1 Peter 4:7-11.

Lit. "Prayers" (although "prayer" is a collective singular, like the word rain). "The plural is used designedly: prayers of all kinds, private or public." [Vincent]

Tyndale's version of the N.T. (as cited by Vincent) has, "that you may be apt to prayers." Certainly, when we look at things with sober-mindedness we will be "apt to pray." We will cry out to God.

This is where we need to weep with those who weep. We look at a lost, sin-cursed world and grieve for the lost. We look at those who are hurting and our hearts break for them.

We learn that life is no game. Cf. my witnessing Yvonne's funeral with John and the kids.

Some of that only comes with age. I feel that turning the page to middle-agedness was one of the best things that ever happened to me as far as ministry is concerned.

Edwards talked about viewing life through the pleasures of heaven and the horrors of hell.

We can choose to get serious, or we will be forced at some point to get serious. If you knew you were going to die on a month, you would be praying as you had never prayed before // be here on Sunday night, if at all possible. It would certainly be more important than sitting in front of the TV.

Cf. Mark 13:34-37. 1 Thess. 4:13-5:11. Eccl. 7:2.

Peter (and Jesus) in Matt. 26:38-42. Jesus prays fervently; Peter and the others sleep.

"Those who pray much will grow rich in grace. The people who thrive and increase most are those who are busiest in this." [Leighton, 197]

". . . be careful that you lift up your hearts with your hands to God; that you pray for such things as are agreeable to the revealed will of God; that you pray in faith, and lift up holy hands without wrath and doubting; and watch for the Spirit of God to enlarge your hearts in prayer, and to assist



you both as to the matter and manner of praying. And persons should also watch after prayer for a return of it; and that they do not depend upon the duty performed; and that they are not negligent to return thanks for the mercy prayed for, when received." [John Gill]

See notes on 3:12. See also my notes on Colossians 4:2 and Matthew 6:9-11.

## 4:8 EXEGESIS

### GREEK TEXT:

προ πάντων τὴν εἰς ἑαυτοὺς ἀγάπην ἐκτενὴ ἔχοντες, ὅτι ἀγάπη καλύπτει πλῆθος ἁμαρτιῶν.

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προ (προ - before, above \* Preposition: Genitive). Genitive of Rank.

πάντων (πας, πασα, παν -- \* Adjective). Genitive of Rank.

τὴν (-- \* Definite Article: Feminine Accusative Singular). --

εἰς ἑαυτοὺς (ἑαυτου - yourself, himself, themselves, etc. \* Reflexive Pronoun: Masculine Accusative Singular). --

ἀγάπην (ἀγάπη -- \* Noun: Feminine Accusative Singular). Adverbial Accusative of Manner.

ἐκτενὴ (ἐκτενης - fervent \* Adjective: Feminine Accusative Singular). Adverbial Accusative of Manner.

ἔχοντες, (ἔχω -- \* Participle: Present Active, Masculine Nominative Plural). Adverbial - Imperative Participle.

ὅτι ἀγάπη (ἀγάπη -- \* Noun: Feminine Nominative Singular). Subject Nominative.

καλύπτει (καλύπτω - to cover, hide \* Verb: Present Indicative Active, 3S). Descriptive Present.

πλῆθος (πλήθος, το - a multitude, crowd \* Noun: Neuter Accusative Singular). Accusative of Direct Object.

ἁμαρτιῶν. (ἁμαρτια - \* Noun: Feminine Genitive Plural). Genitive of Description.

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### ENGLISH TRANSLATION:

**Above all, remain fervent in your love for one another, for love covers a multitude of sins.**

### CONTEXTUAL, GRAMMATICAL, THEOLOGICAL, APPLICATIONAL ANALYSIS:

**Above all,** (προ πάντων)

προ (προ - before, above \* Preposition: Genitive). Genitive of Rank. The word can refer to first as "first in order," or "first in priority." The emphasis here is on priority. The priority of love.

Why "above all?" Christian tradition for one thing (cf. John 13:35; James 2:8; 1 Cor. 13:1 ff; Matt. 22:37-38; Romans 13:8; 1 John; Col. 3:14).

See 1 Thess. 4:9 and parallels to 1 John. One of the evidences of saving faith is love of the brethren.

1 Tim. 1:5; Heb. 13:1; 2 Pet. 1:6-7.

Second, note the additional thoughts Peter gives, that love "covers a multitude of sins."

**remain fervent in your love for one another,** (τὴν εἰς ἑαυτοὺς ἀγάπην ἐκτενὴ ἔχοντες,)

ἔχοντες, (ἔχω -- \* Participle: Present Active, Masculine Nominative Plural). Adverbial - Imperative Participle.

ἐκτεινῆ (ἐκτεινῆς - fervent \* Adjective: Feminine Accusative Singular). Adverbial Accusative of Manner. Idea of being stretched out. "The idea is a love that is extended to reach the one loved." [Wuest] Word only used here. Earnestly.

From my notes on 1:22 ==>

ἐκτεινῶς – comes from the verb *τείνω*, to stretch. Has t/idea of intense strain, being stretched. It's to be passionate, but not only passionate, also consistent. IOW - it's t/kind of love that has an intensity about it. It goes t/distance, it lasts. It's not a wimpy, overly emotive. It's a love w/depth. It's t/kind of love that should mark a marriage as well as a family & since t/CH of JC is t/Bride of X & a family, it should mark our relationships as well.

Note the parallel to 1:22 . . . (cf. message 12051Pe1.22(33))

"Having purified your souls by obedience to the truth for a sincere love of the brethren, fervently love each other from a pure heart."

**for love covers a multitude of sins.** (ὅτι ἀγάπη καλύπτει πλῆθος ἁμαρτιῶν.)

What love? That fervent love that is maintained.

καλύπτει (καλύπτω - to cover, hide \* Verb: Present Indicative Active, 3S). Descriptive Present.

Note James 5:20. Any connection? Luke 7:47?

Proverbs 10:12 Hatred stirs up strife, But love covers all transgressions.

πλῆθος (πλήθος, το - a multitude, crowd \* Noun: Neuter Accusative Singular). Accusative of Direct Object.

Is this love covering the sins of the one loving or the one being loved or both? ATR writes, "sins of the one loved, not of the one loving."

Ideas.... Lip service love; "we take all things well from him who loves us;" The priority in the body of love and humility and brokenness. Cf. Psalm 51 (toward the end).

## 4:9 EXEGESIS

GREEK TEXT:

φιλόξενοι εἰς ἀλλήλους ἄνευ γογγυσμοῦ,

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φιλόξενοι (φιλόξενος - hospitable \* Adjective: Masculine Nominative Plural). Independent Nominative?

εἰς ἀλλήλους (ἀλλήλων -- \* Reciprocal Pronoun: Masculine Accusative Plural). Accusative of Direct Object.

ἄνευ (ἄνευ - without \* Preposition).

γογγυσμοῦ, (γογγυσμος - complaint, murmuring \* Noun: Masculine Genitive Singular). Genitive of Attendant Circumstances.

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ENGLISH TRANSLATION:

**Be hospitable to one another, without complaint.**

CONTEXTUAL, GRAMMATICAL, THEOLOGICAL, APPLICATIONAL ANALYSIS:

**Be hospitable to one another,** (φιλόξενοι εἰς ἀλλήλους)

Here is the proof of the love of v. 8. (as is service in v. 9). Specifically, in the 1st and 2nd centuries among Christians (cf. the didache).

1 But let every one that cometh in the name of the Lord be received; and then when ye have tested him ye shall know him, for ye shall have understanding on the right hand and on the left. 2 If the comer is a traveler, assist him, so far as ye are able; but he shall not stay with you more than two or three days, if it be necessary. 3 But if he wishes to settle with you, being a craftsman, let him work for and eat his bread. 4 But if he has no craft, according to your wisdom provide how he shall live as a Christian among you, but not in idleness. 5 If he will not do this, he is trafficking upon Christ. Beware of such men. [Didache 12:1-5]

1 But every time prophet desiring to settle among you is worthy of his food. 2 In like manner a true teacher is also worthy, like the workman, of his food. 3 Every firstfruit then of the produce of the wine-vat and of the threshing-floor, of thy oxen and of thy sheep, thou shalt take and give as the firstfruit to the prophets; for they are your chief-priests. 4 But if ye have not a prophet, give them to the poor. [Didache 13:1-4]

φιλόξενοι (φιλόξενος - hospitable \* Adjective: Masculine Nominative Plural). Independent Nominative?

Same word used of elders in 1 Timothy 3:2. From my notes there ==>

Word φιλόξευος means "showing love to strangers". from ξευος which means "foreign, stranger, alien" with φίλος "love or friendship" added as a prefix.

This isn't having your friends over for t/evening. Sometimes you'll hear someone say: "Yes, `so & so' has t/gift of hospitality. He is always inviting his friends over for dinner." For one thing, I don't know of a spiritual gift of hospitality. Closest thing = "helps" in 1 Cor. 12:28.

For another thing, that's not the kind of hospitality that's meant here. Everyone entertains their friends! Hey: Invite me over for a good dinner. I'll show up!

HEB 13:2 **Do not neglect to show hospitality to strangers, for by this some have entertained angels without knowing it.** [Never know who you may be helping!] OT example of that is Abraham & Lot, who showed hospitality to 3 men who turned out to be God & two holy angels (Gen. 18-19).

Rahab practiced H. to t/spies in Joshua 2 & her life was saved & her name recorded as an ancestor of t/Messiah. Widow of Zarephath received Elijah & was rewarded w/food & her son brought back to life. ISW Shunammite W. was rewarded for her H. to Elisha (2 Kings 4). Need I go on? Zacchaeus received t/Lord gladly & salv. came to his house.

Remember what Jesus himself said in **Matthew 25:34-45** [=>] IOW - hospitality & selfless ministry are to charact. t/regenerate even as apathy & neglect charact. t/unbelieving. That's Luke 10 (Par. of G.S.).

That's James 2:15-17 **If a brother or sister is without clothing and in need of daily food, and one of you says to them, "Go in peace, be warmed and be filled," and yet you do not give them what is necessary for *their* body, what use is Even so faith, if it has no works, is dead, *being* by itself**

That's 1 John 3:17-18 **But whoever has the world's goods, and beholds his brother in need and closes his heart against him, how does the love of God abide in Little children, let us not love with word or with tongue, but in deed and truth.**

That applies to all of us. Romans 12:13: "practicing hospitality". (Same word: "loving strangers") We are all to practice hospitality. If you think about it: God received us a strangers & aliens did He not? So how could we not do the same for others?!

Especially pertinent in the 1st century. You didn't have a Motel 6 in every town. Inns that did exist were usually brothels. They were dirty & expensive.

Plato speaks of the innkeeper being like a pirate, who holds his guests for ransom.

In one of Aristophanes's plays, Heracles asks his companion where they will lodge for the night; and the answer was: 'Where the fleas are fewest.'

The Inns of the time were little more than brothels and Christian as a class were quite poor (cf. James). Note Heb. 13:2.

So Ancient world devised what was known as 'Guest Friendships.' Families made arrangements w/others to give ea. other hospitality in case of need, part. during travel. Sometimes t/extended members of t/families invl. in these "G.F." were unknown to ea. other, so they had a system of I.D. by what was called "tessera hospitalis" or "tallies." "Tallies" were some sort of an object that was broken in 2 & only matched t/other half (kind of like a key in a lock). So if you came into a town, and needed accommodation. You sought out your "G.F." & produced your tally. When t/host had t/other half he knew that he had indeed found an arranged guest. [cf. Barclay, DSB: 1 Timothy, 82]

Additionally, t/1st c. was filled w/itinerant preachers/teachers who needed food & shelter. There were slaves who had no place to turn. Most of t/CH was poor & when traveling often had to settle for less than ideal conditions. Entire CH was an island of Xnity in a sea of paganism.

Yet the emphasis here is one "one another." Romans 12:13.

"But Peter's use of the reciprocal pronoun (εἰς ἀλλήλο) implies that hospitality within the local group is involved. Since there were no separate church buildings for the first two centuries, each local congregation met in the home of one of its members (cf. Rom 16:5, 1 Cor 16:19; Phile 2). This practice put their hospitality to a practical test." [D. Edmond Hiebert, *Selected Studies from 1 Peter. Part 3: Living in the Light of Christ's Return: An Exposition of 1 Peter 4:7-11.* BSac 139:555 (Jul 82) pp. 244 ff.]

**without complaint.** (ἀνευ γογγυσμοῦ,)

γογγυσμοῦ, (γογγυσμος - complaint, murmuring \* Noun: Masculine Genitive Singular). Genitive of Attendant Circumstances. Word only used here, in John 7:12; Acts 6:1; Phil. 2:14.

Cf. Phil. 2:14; 3 John 5; James 5:9. Exo 16:7-9; 1 Cor. 10:10.

"Such grumbling is ultimately a complaint against God and his ordering of our circumstances, and its result is to drive out faith, thanksgiving, and joy. Though hospitality to all people is certainly pleasing to God Peter's emphasis on hospitality *to one another*--that is, to other Christians within the household of faith--is consistent with the rest of the N.T. (cf. Gal. 6:10)." [Grudem, 174]

The complaining or grumbling here is in connection with the practice of hospitality. Whenever one reaches out to another to give time, resources, or help with living arrangements and food, there is the possibility that one's help will be exploited. Certainly, there is inconvenience. That inconvenience and loss of privacy and/or resources and time, will tempt on to complain. Love one another, show hospitality to one another, w/o complaining about it. Cf. Rom 12:8; 2 Cor. 9:7.

"Our homes need to be open. Because our hearts are open. And our hearts are open because God's heart is open to us. Do you recall how John the apostle connected the love of God with

our love for each other in relation to hospitality? He wrote in 1 John 3:16-17, "By this we know love, that [Jesus] laid down his life for us, and we ought to lay down our lives for the brothers. But if anyone has the world's goods and sees his brother in need [single or married!], yet closes his heart against him, how does God's love abide in him?" [John Piper, sermon]

"God has granted to each of us the special graces needed for the upbuilding of his church, so that we will do what he has indicated should be done, not only without complaint, but with joy." [Augustine]

## 4:10 EXEGESIS

### GREEK TEXT:

ἕκαστος καθὼς ἔλαβεν χάρισμα εἰς ἑαυτοὺς αὐτὸ διακονοῦντες ὡς καλοὶ οἰκονόμοι ποικίλης χάριτος θεοῦ.

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ἕκαστος (ἕκαστος - each one, every one \* Demonstrative Pronoun: Nominative Masculine Singular).  
καθὼς (καθὼς - as, even as \* Conjunction).  
ἔλαβεν (λαμβάνω - to take, receive \* Verb: Aorist Indicative Active, 3S). Culminative Aorist.  
χάρισμα (χάρισμα - gift \* Noun: Neuter Accusative Singular). Accusative of Direct Object.  
εἰς ἑαυτοὺς (ἑαυτοῦ - \* Pronoun: Third Person Reflexive, Masculine Accusative Plural).  
αὐτὸ (Pronoun: Third Person Independent Personal, Neuter Accusative Singular).  
διακονοῦντες (διακονεῶ - \* Participle: Present Active, Masculine Nominative Plural). Adverbial -  
Telic Participle. "For the purpose of."  
ὡς καλοὶ οἰκονόμοι (οἰκονόμος - steward, manager \* Noun: Masculine Nominative Plural).  
Nominative of Appellation.  
ποικίλης (ποικίλος - diverse, manifold \* Adjective: Feminine Genitive Singular). Genitive of  
Description.  
χάριτος ( -- \* Noun: Feminine Genitive Singular). Genitive of Description.  
θεοῦ. ( -- \* Noun: Masculine Genitive Singular). Genitive of Possession.

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### ENGLISH TRANSLATION:

**As each one has received a [spiritual] gift, use it to serve one another as good stewards of the manifold grace of God.**

### CONTEXTUAL, GRAMMATICAL, THEOLOGICAL, APPLICATIONAL ANALYSIS:

Note the NIV's rather unique translation:

Each one should use whatever gift he has received to serve others, faithfully administering God's grace in its various forms.

**As each one has received a [spiritual] gift,** (ἕκαστος καθὼς ἔλαβεν χάρισμα)

"“Each one” (ἕκαστ), standing emphatically first, stresses that the duties and functions of a steward have been assigned to each believer." [D. Edmond Hiebert, Selected Studies from 1 Peter. Part 3: Living in the Light of Christ's Return: An Exposition of 1 Peter 4:7-11. BSac 139:555 (Jul 82) pp. 244 ff.]

ἕκαστος (ἕκαστος - each one, every one \* Demonstrative Pronoun: Nominative Masculine Singular).



χάρισμα (χάρισμα - gift \* Noun: Neuter Accusative Singular). Accusative of Direct Object.

"*Charisma* basically means 'a gift.' Outside of the N.T. it is not at all a common word. In classical Greek, it is rare. . . . but there is one suggestive occurrence where a man classifies his property as that which he acquired *apo agorasias* 'by purchase,' and that which he acquired *apa charismatos*, 'by gift.' [It is used 17x, 14x in Paul, 1x 1 Peter; 2x in the PEx.] . . . It is used of what we might call 'Gifts of grace.' It is used of God's 'grace and forgiveness' in that situation where judgment and condemnation would have been only just. In Rom. 6:23 . . . the wages of sin is death, but the *charisma* of God is eternal life. . . . It is specially used for all 'the special gifts which can be exercised in the service of the Church'. . . . The whole basic idea of the word is that of a free and undeserved gift, of something given to a man unearned and unmerited, something which comes from God's grace and which could never have been achieved or attained or possessed by a man's own effort. . . . Now *charisma* also is a military word. When an emperor came to the throne, or when he was celebrating his birthday, he gave his troops a *donativum* or *charisma*, which was a free grant of money, a free gift. They had not earned it as they had their *opsōnia*; they got it unearned out of the goodness of the emperor's heart. So then what we have earned, our *opsōnia*, would be death. All that we have is *charisma*, God's free gift. All is from God. Every grace with which life is adorned, the grace which covers every sin, every natural endowment we possess, every gift which we can lay at the service of the Church, any office we may hold, every time we have been through something which threatened our bodies or our souls—God gave it, God did it, it is God's *charisma*, all is of God." [Barclay, Words, s.v. *Charisma*]

BAG ==>

2. of special gifts of a non-material sort, bestowed by the grace of God on individual Christians 1 Pt 4:10; 1 Cl 38:1. Of the gift of an office, mediated by the laying on of hands 1 Ti 4:14; 2 Ti 1:6. Of the power to be continent in matters of sex 1 Cor 7:7. Of the spiritual gifts in a special sense Ro 12:6; 1 Cor 12:4, 9, 28, 30, 31.—S. in addition to the lit. s.v. γλῶσσα . . . . M-M.

Note that there are 5 lists of spiritual gifts in the N.T. (Rom 12:6-8; 1 Cor. 12:7-11; 12:28-30; Eph. 4:11; 1 Peter 4:10). Note the lists differ from each other and the uniqueness that this implies (and the fact that there are variances between the same gift as applied to each person).

"Each believer's spiritual giftedness is unique, as if each were a spiritual snowflake or fingerprint. It is as if God dips his paintbrush into different colors or categories of gifts, on his spiritual palette and paints each Christian a unique blend of colors."

Not only does God gift the gifts as He wills, he also gives the faith necessary to exercise them (Rom. 12:3). God's not going to gift and call you to do something that he will not enable you do to. (I had a terrible time with public speaking at one point in my life and I still can get intimidated at the thought of preaching).

These are all of grace. Each person is gifted for service. Good way to put it. I don't like spiritual gift inventories. Lesson, get to work! Serve! God will steer you toward your place in the church!

About service, not self. Service, not self.

**use it to serve one another** (εἰς ἑαυτοὺς αὐτὸ διακονοῦντες)

διακονοῦντες (διακονεω - \* Participle: Present Active, Masculine Nominative Plural). Adverbial - Telic Participle. "For the purpose of."

This is always the focus of our gifts. They are to serve one another, not ourselves.

Term "serve" is used in several ways in the N.T.: 1) providing meals (Matt. 8:15; Mark 1:31; Luke 4:39, 10:40, 12:37, 17:8; John 12:2; Acts 6:2) -- hospitality; 2) visiting those in prison (Matt. 25:44; 2 Tim. 1:18); 3) providing financial support (Luke 8:3; Rom. 15:25; 2 Cor. 8:19-20); 4) General works of service (Matt. 20:28; Mark 10:45; Luke 22:26-27; John 12:26; Acts 19:22; 2 Cor. 3:3; 1 Tim. 3:10,13; Philem. 13; Heb. 6:10).

One scholar says that the idea is one of "humble service."

This is a demonstration of love - hospitality and service. No matter what you do, do it out of service and love for the brethren. I preach out of love for God and love for you. I very much look at it as my serving you.

We need what we can offer one another. Everyone has received a special gift and no one has received all the gifts! No super-spiritual-saints that are exempt from being ministered to. We all need one another. I need to be ministered to by you! Who are you to think that just because I am preaching elder in this church I don't need you! Don't trample underfoot that which God has given you!

"But this consideration is also very important, that the Lord hath so divided his manifold graces, that no one is to be content with one thing and with his own gifts, but every one has need of the help and aid of his brother. This, I say, is a bond which God hath appointed for retaining friendship among men, for they cannot live without mutual assistance. Thus it happens, that he who in many things seeks the aid of his brethren, ought to communicate to them more freely what he has received. This bond of unity has been observed and noticed by heathens. But Peter teaches us here that God had designedly done this, that he might bind men one to another."  
[Calvin]

We are all embers that grow cold and need to be stirred up.

Even though he's given it to you, it is still his. He owns these gifts. We manage them ==>

**as good stewards of the manifold grace of God.** (ὡς καλοὶ οἰκονόμοι ποικίλης χάριτος θεοῦ.)

ὡς καλοὶ οἰκονόμοι (οἰκονόμος - steward, manager \* Noun: Masculine Nominative Plural). Nominative of Appellation. From οἶκος (house) and νεμω (to manage). Ultimately, our stewardship is a general one given to all men. Part of our being made in God's image and likeness (Gen. 2:24). Specially, it is the stewardship we have as believers in JC.

Gifts are not a right, but a responsibility. Idea is one of management.

God has given us manifold grace - we are to be good stewards of that grace. Managers. Broaden the idea to include your salvation, your circumstances, your possessions, your family, etc.

"Bishops/elders are called stewards (Titus 1:5-9) and are expected to possess holy qualities as they manage the household of God. The apostle Paul also saw himself as a steward (1 Cor. 4:1-2) who would have to give an account of his stewardship (1 Cor. 4:3-4; cf. 2 Tim. 4:7-8) as the Apostle to the Gentiles (Eph. 3:2; Gal. 2:7-8; Rom. 1:5-6; 13-15). There is also a sense in which every Christian is a steward entrusted with a divine gift (1 Pet. 4:10). Faithful and wise stewardship of this gift or 'talent' will result in blessing and reward but unfaithfulness will result in judgment (Luke 12:42-43; Matt. 25:14-30)." [Paul J. Achtemeier, Paul J. Achtemeier, Publishers Harper & Row and Society of Biblical Literature, Harper's Bible Dictionary, Includes index., 1st ed. (San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1985).]

Wicked executors versus good executors.

Stewards in antiquity were often slaves who managed the business affairs of the household. Jesus based several of his parables on the concept of the steward. (Luke 12:41-344; 16:1-8).

ποικίλης (ποικίλος - diverse, manifold \* Adjective: Feminine Genitive Singular). Genitive of Description. Cf. use in 1:6. Heb. 2:4; James 1:2.

(ποικίλος, η, ου ς - of various kinds, diverse, FIG: ambiguous, sly, crafty \* Adj. dat. masc. pl.). Word is used of the skin of a leopard, diff. colored veins in marble, changing months/seasons, changes in music. [Vincent]. Trials come in all shapes and forms and at different seasons. Cf. phrase "polka dot" that comes from this Gk. word.

Points to the fact that every Christian has been gifted and is to use that gift. Xmas is coming. Idea of giving someone a precious gift that they then ignore.

"Each believer has his share in ministering "the manifold grace of God." The collective singular, "the grace of God," comprehends all the gifts graciously bestowed, while the adjective "manifold" (ποικίλη) displays the "many-colored" gifts in their infinite variety. The Lord of the church has distributed His bounty with masterly variety to enable His people successfully to encounter the "manifold trials" (1:6) to which they are subjected." [D. Edmond Hiebert, BSac 139:555 (Jul 82) pp. 244 ff.]

Interesting. This shows that the "gift" is all grace. We are to be good stewards (good managers) of the manifold grace of God, that grace which relates to the "gift". The gift is by grace.

We want to be found "good stewards." Not the dangers in being poor stewards and the problem of so many in the church leaving their gift "unwrapped" as it were.

Again, no room for Christian celebrityism.

MAT 20:28 just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many. "

MAT 24:45 "Who then is the faithful and sensible slave whom his master put in charge of his household to give them their food at the proper time?"

MAT 25:14-15 "For {it is} just like a man {about} to go on a journey, who called his own slaves, and entrusted his possessions to them. 15 "And to one he gave five talents, to another, two, and to another, one, each according to his own ability; and he went on his journey.

MAT 25:44 "Then they themselves also will answer, saying, 'Lord, when did we see You hungry, or thirsty, or a stranger, or naked, or sick, or in prison, and did not take care of You?'

MAR 10:45 "For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many."

**LUK 12:42 And the Lord said, "Who then is the faithful and sensible steward, whom his master will put in charge of his servants, to give them their rations at the proper time?"**

LUK 16:1-8 1 Now He was also saying to the disciples, "There was a certain rich man who had a steward, and this {steward} was reported to him as squandering his possessions. 2 "And he called him and said to him, 'What is this I hear about you? Give an account of your stewardship, for you can no longer be steward.' 3 "And the steward said to himself, 'What shall I do, since my master is taking the stewardship away from me? I am not strong enough to dig; I am ashamed to beg. 4 'I know what I shall do, so that when I am removed from the stewardship, they will receive me into their homes.' 5 "And he summoned each one of his master's debtors, and he {began} saying to the first, 'How much do you owe my master?' 6 "And he said, 'A hundred measures of oil.' And he said to him, 'Take your bill, and sit down quickly and write fifty.' 7 "Then he said to another, 'And how much do you owe?' And he said, 'A hundred measures of wheat.' He \*said to him, 'Take your bill, and write eighty.' 8 "And his master praised the unrighteous steward because he had acted shrewdly; for the sons of this age are more shrewd in relation to their own kind than the sons of light.

LUK 19:13 "And he called ten of his slaves, and gave them ten minas, and said to them, 'Do business {with this} until I come {back.}'"

ROM 12:6-8 6 And since we have gifts that differ according to the grace given to us, {let each exercise them accordingly}: if prophecy, according to the proportion of his faith; 7 if service, in his serving; or he who teaches, in his teaching; 8 or he who exhorts, in his exhortation; he who gives, with liberality; he who leads, with diligence; he who shows mercy, with cheerfulness.

1CO 4:1-2 1 Let a man regard us in this manner, as servants of Christ, and stewards of the mysteries of God. 2 In this case, moreover, it is required of stewards that one be found trustworthy.

1CO 12:4-11 4 Now there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit. 5 And there are varieties of ministries, and the same Lord. 6 And there are varieties of effects, but the same God who works all things in all {persons.} 7 But to each one is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good. 8 For to one is given the word of wisdom through the Spirit, and to another the word of knowledge according to the same Spirit; 9 to another faith by the same Spirit, and to another gifts of healing by the one Spirit, 10 and to another the effecting of miracles, and to another prophecy, and to another the distinguishing of spirits, to another {various} kinds of tongues, and to another the interpretation of tongues. 11 But one and the same Spirit works all these things, distributing to each one individually just as He wills.

Note the comparison of the gifts in the body to the parts of the human body in 1 Cor. 12:15ff. Ministry would be impossible apart from all the gifted people stewarding their gifts. I pray for you, that you don't lose heart. In a way, you are like those servants we read about in Acts 6 . . . .

Apathy in the physical body. That which happens when body parts and internal organs stop functioning through disease. Apathy in the spiritual body.

Anarchy in the physical body is cancer. Anarchy in the spiritual body.

## 4:11 EXEGESIS

### GREEK TEXT:

εἴ τις λαλεῖ, ὡς λόγια θεοῦ· εἴ τις διακονεῖ, ὡς ἐξ ἰσχύος ἧς χορηγεῖ ὁ θεός, ἵνα ἐν πᾶσιν δοξάζεται ὁ θεὸς διὰ Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ, ᾧ ἐστὶν ἡ δόξα καὶ τὸ κράτος εἰς τοὺς αἰῶνας τῶν αἰώνων, ἀμήν.

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εἴ τις λαλεῖ, (λαλεω - \* Verb: Present Indicative Active, 3S). Iterative or Aoristic Present.  
ὡς λόγια (λογιον - saying, utterance \* Noun: Neuter Nominative Plural). ??  
θεοῦ· (θεος - \* Noun: Masculine Genitive Singular). Genitive of Possession.  
εἴ τις διακονεῖ, (διακονεω - \* Verb: Present Indicative Active, 3S). Iterative or Aoristic Present.  
ὡς ἐξ ἰσχύος (ἰσχυς - strength, power \* Noun: Feminine Genitive Singular). Genitive of Description.  
ἧς (Pronoun: Relative, Feminine Genitive Singular).  
χορηγεῖ (χορηγεω - supply \* Verb: Present Indicative Active, 3S). Descriptive Present.  
ὁ θεός, (θεος - \* Noun: Masculine Nominative Singular). Subject Nominative.  
ἵνα ἐν πᾶσιν (πας, πασα, παν - \* Adjective). --  
δοξάζεται (δοξάζω - \* Verb: Present Subjunctive Passive, 3S). Subjunctive in a Dependent, Purpose Clause. Descriptive Present.  
ὁ θεὸς (θεος - \* Noun: Masculine Nominative Singular). Subject Nominative.  
διὰ Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ, ( -- \* Noun: Masculine Genitive Singular). Genitive / Ablative of Personal Agency.  
ᾧ (Pronoun: Relative, Masculine Dative Singular).  
ἐστὶν (εἰμι - \* Verb: Present Indicative Active, 3S). Descriptive Present.  
ἡ δόξα (δόξα - \* Noun: Feminine Nominative Singular). Predicate Nominative.  
καὶ τὸ κράτος (κράτος - power, might, strength \* Noun: Neuter Nominative Singular). Predicate Nominative.  
εἰς τοὺς αἰῶνας (αἰών - \* Noun: Masculine Accusative Plural).  
τῶν αἰώνων, (αἰών - \* Noun: Masculine Genitive Plural).  
ἀμήν. (emphatic particle). --

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### ENGLISH TRANSLATION:

**If anyone speaks, [let him speak] as the utterances of God; if anyone serves, [let him serve] out of the strength supplied by God; so that in everything God may be glorified through Jesus Christ. To Him be the glory and power forever and ever. Amen!**

### CONTEXTUAL, GRAMMATICAL, THEOLOGICAL, APPLICATIONAL ANALYSIS:

May be that this verse is following the primitive two-fold function of ministry: 1) speaking; 2) serving. This we see in Acts 6:1 ff. - ministry of the word and of tables.

Peter may also be looking toward two primary offices: Elder and Deacon (preacher and servant). In looking at these he encapsulates all of the gifts as they are all either outward/prominent or inward/inconspicuous. Public and private. Umbrella under which all gifts flow.

**If anyone speaks, [let him speak] as the utterances of God** (εἴ τις λαλεῖ, ὡς λόγια θεοῦ)

First class condition.

*"For those who preach, preach as if giving the oracles of God Himself."*

In these first two clauses, a verb is missing. Bullinger categorizes this phenomenon as "Ellipsis - When the Verb Finite is Wanting." This is under the first chapter, "Figures Involving Omission - affecting words."

"Speaking "as it were, the utterances of God" (ὡς λόγιθεου) marks the necessary subjective feeling of the speaker as he exercises his gift. He must be conscious that what he says is God's message for the occasion. In classical Greek the λόγια were the utterances or responses of some deity. In the Septuagint the term is often used of "the Word of the Lord," and elsewhere in the New Testament it has reference to the Old Testament Scriptures (Rom 3:2; Acts 7:38; Heb 5:12). Here the sense seems to be that the speaker utters his message with the consciousness that he is giving not merely his own opinion but God's message under the leadership of the Spirit." [D. Edmond Hiebert, BSac 139:555 (Jul 82) pp. 244 ff.]

Christian teachers in the congregation? Balaam as a type of what Peter is talking about here (cf. Numbers 24:1 ff.).

How does this apply? Not to general conversation. Authoritative teaching in the church. This is preaching. Not sharing devotional thoughts (testifying) or singing. Cf. 1 Cor. 11.

The pinnacle of Christian speech is preaching the Gospel. Powerful preaching! It's hard to hear the utterances of God nowadays. Where can you go? Shenanigans on TV? It would be hard for an unbeliever to even stumble upon truth today. Preaching today is often entertaining, less often edifying. Often , less often profound, often less often powerful. No secret. Relevance? I don't know what that means. "I want relevant preaching." "I need lots of stories and application." Generally, what you find with those sort of folks is a level of maturity a mile wide and an inch deep. How did God design it? If I pull up to a gas station I want the right kind of fuel.

Embarrassed by some of the stuff I see on TV...

ὡς λόγια (λογιον - saying, utterance \* Noun: Neuter Nominative Plural). Used of oracles of God, or utterances of God to man (used in Acts 7:38; Rom. 3:2). The "as" doesn't mean that one is speaking the oracles of God. But there should be a seriousness in so doing as one speaking in God's stead and for his glory. Only found in 4 verses: Here, Acts 7:38; Romans 3:2 and Heb. 5:12.

"In classical Greek the λόγια were the utterances or responses of some deity. In the Septuagint the term is often used of "the Word of the Lord," and elsewhere in the New Testament it has

reference to the Old Testament Scriptures (Rom 3:2; Acts 7:38; Heb 5:12). Here the sense seems to be that the speaker utters his message with the consciousness that he is giving not merely his own opinion but God's message under the leadership of the Spirit." [D. Edmond Hiebert, Selected Studies from 1 Peter. Part 3: Living in the Light of Christ's Return: An Exposition of 1 Peter 4:7-11. BSac 139:555 (Jul 82) pp. 244 ff.]

This is an office for men. Sexist? Note my experience at Northeastern. Might want to address the meaning of 1 Tim. 2 and 1 Cor. 11 in harmony w/each other.

Preaching quotes/illustrations?

". . . the sacred Scriptures; so called, because they come from God, are breathed and spoken by him, and contain his mind and will, and are authoritative and infallible; and according to these he is to speak who speaks in public on divine subjects, both as to the matter and manner of his speech: the matter of it must be agreeably to the divinely inspired word of God, must be fetched out of it, and confirmed by it; and he is to speak every thing that is in it, and keep back nothing, but declare the whole counsel of God, and only what is in it, without mixing his own chaff, or the doctrines of men with it; and it should be spoken in a manner agreeably to it, not as the word of man, but as the word of God; and not in words which man's wisdom teacheth, but in the words of the Holy Ghost; and with all boldness, for so the Gospel ought to be spoken; and with all certainty and assurance, constantly affirming the things of it, for nothing is more sure than they are; and with all openness, plainness, and freedom, making truth manifest, laying it plain and open before men, as it ought to be; and that with all reverence and godly fear, which becomes both speaker and hearer." [Gill]

Oracles is an OT idea. Words that God has given to his people (Acts 17:38; Rom. 3:2; Heb. 5:12). Faithfulness to the Gospel and the WOG.

You may have a public or prominent place of ministry, or you may have a more humble place.

**if anyone serves, [let him serve] out of the strength supplied by God;** (εἴ τις διακονεῖ, ὡς ἐξ ἰσχύος ἧς χορηγεῖ ὁ θεός,)

First class condition.

“Whoever serves” (εἴ τις διακονεῖ) seems best understood as including all forms of Christian ministry other than speech. The one rendering the service (τις, “any one”) is again left entirely indefinite. It is unwarranted to limit the reference to the office of the deacon, as Demarest does. The context simply limits the service to the realm of deeds. [D. Edmond Hiebert, BSac 139:555 (Jul 82) pp. 244 ff.]

ὡς ἐξ ἰσχύος (ἰσχυς - strength, power \* Noun: Feminine Genitive Singular). Genitive of Description. Cf. Col. 1:29.

χορηγεῖ (χορηγεῖω - supply \* Verb: Present Indicative Active, 3S). Descriptive Present.



Don't lose heart and grow weary (Gal. 6:9; 2 Thess. 3:13). Serving is tiresome. Caring for others can be exhausting, and thankless. Why we need the strength God supplies.

“By the strength which God supplies” is a timely reminder that Christian service must be rendered in a spirit of humility and divine enablement. The one serving must avoid the conceit that the strength and ability to perform the service are his own. If his service promotes the well-being of the brotherhood, he must realize that this ability is “by” (ἐκ, “out of”) divine enablement (cf. John 15:4). God abundantly “supplies” (χορηγεῖ) the needed strength to carry out His work. In classical Greek the verb was used of paying the expenses of a chorus in the performance of a drama; since the performance reflected on the prior provision of all that was needed, the term came to denote supplying in abundance. Christian service must be humbly yet aggressively performed in full reliance on God’s enablement.” [D. Edmond Hiebert, BSac 139:555 (Jul 82) pp. 244 ff.]

Whether high or low, God is to be glorified. ==>

It's like a funnel. You may have a prominent role or a humble role, but in reality both are done selflessly to the glory of God. That's one reason why I don't engage in theatrics. I stick behind the pulpit.

I always cringe a little when I see some preacher, looking like a 3 million dollar lawyer, walking around and talking. How many times do I hear of someone like that and how impressed people are . . . with him! I've said it before, don't ever be impressed with me, be impressed with God! Who am I to steal glory from Him?!

Here's the reason why we focus on God for our gifts/strength and not ourselves. It's so the focus isn't on us, but on Him.

**so that in everything God may be glorified through Jesus Christ.** (ἵνα ἐν πᾶσιν δοξάζεται ὁ θεὸς διὰ Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ,)

How foolish to have people pray for me and then give them the glory is if their prayer joined together to move some cosmic dust to mystically rearrange my circumstances!

ἵνα ἐν πᾶσιν (πας, πασα, παν - \* Adjective). -- Note the "hina" with the subjunctive.

δοξάζεται (δοξάζω - \* Verb: Present Subjunctive Passive, 3S). Subjunctive in a Dependent, Purpose Clause. Descriptive Present.

ὁ θεὸς (θεος - \* Noun: Masculine Nominative Singular). Subject Nominative. "The God".

"And in all the duties and services of life, we should aim at the glory of God as our chief end. He is a miserable, unsettled wretch, who cleaves to himself, and forgets God; is only perplexed about his credit, and gain, and base ends, which are often broken, and which, when he attains, both he and they must shortly perish together. But he who has given up himself and his all to God, may say confidently that the Lord is his portion; and nothing but glory through Christ Jesus, is solid and lasting; that abideth for ever." [Matthew Henry]

δια Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ, ( -- \* Noun: Masculine Genitive Singular). Genitive / Ablative of Personal Agency.

Sometimes we overlook these little words. "Through" Jesus Christ. δια. Personal agency. Genitive of personal agency. The means by which we can glorify God is through Jesus Christ.

"He says through Jesus Christ, because whatever power we have to minister, he alone bestows it on us; for he is the head, with which the whole body is connected by joints and bindings, and maketh increase in the Lord, according as he supplieth strength to every member." [Calvin]

In everything . . . Really, all of ministry can be summed up in one or two of these categorizations, serving and speaking. (Romans 12:6-8.) All-encompassing; so that "in everything" God may be glorified.

**To Him be the glory and power forever and ever. Amen!** (ὧ ἐστὶν ἡ δόξα καὶ τὸ κράτος εἰς τοὺς αἰῶνας τῶν αἰώνων, ἀμην.)

ὧ (Pronoun: Relative, Masculine Dative Singular). ἐστὶν (εἶμι - \* Verb: Present Indicative Active, 3S). Descriptive Present.

"The insertion of ἐστὶν changes the doxology to a statement of fact and this supports the interpretation of ὧ as referring of the immediate antecedent *Jesus Christ*." [Expositors]

Implications as to Christ's deity. Note the debate in Michaels as to whom the antecedent is (God the Father or Jesus Christ). Michaels, page 253, sides with the latter. Cf. Rev. 1:6.

"To whom be praise, or glory. Some refer this to Christ; but the context requires that it should be rather applied to God; for he confirms the last exhortation, because God justly claims all the glory; and, therefore, men wickedly take away from him what is his own, when they obscure in anything, or in any part, his glory." [Calvin]

"“To whom” may refer to either Jesus Christ or God the Father. In favor of Jesus Christ is the fact that He is the nearer antecedent here and that in Hebrews 13:20–21; 2 Peter 3:18; and Revelation 1:5–6 the glory is ascribed to Christ. In favor of God the Father is the fact that He is the subject of the sentence. Best cites three considerations in favor of God the Father as the intended antecedent:

- (i) The reference to the glorification of God in the preceding clause links with “glory” here; (ii) The majority of NT doxologies are offered to God, and in particular the very similar doxology of 5:11 is offered to him; (iii) To speak of glorifying God “through Jesus Christ” and then to speak of glory belonging to Christ seems odd.

It is preferable to take God the Father as the subject of this doxology." [D. Edmond Hiebert, Selected Studies from 1 Peter. Part 3: Living in the Light of Christ's Return: An Exposition of 1 Peter 4:7-11. BSac 139:555 (Jul 82) pp. 244 ff.]

"God is magnified as possessing "the glory and dominion" (ἡ δόξα καὶ τὸ κράτος). The definite article in the Greek with both nouns marks them as separate and distinct possessions, rightfully belonging to Him. He possesses "the glory," the radiant majesty and sublimity characteristic of deity, and He exercises "the dominion" (κράτος, "might and power in action"), marking Him as the sovereign Ruler over all. To Him belong the glory and the dominion "forever and ever" (εἰς τοὺς αἰῶνας αἰῶν), literally, "unto the ages of the ages." This strengthened form of "forever" emphasizes the thought of eternity in the strongest way. The expression depicts eternity as "a series of ages flowing on endlessly, in each of which a number of other shorter ages are gathered up." [D. Edmond Hiebert, Selected Studies from 1 Peter. Part 3: Living in the Light of Christ's Return: An Exposition of 1 Peter 4:7-11. BSac 139:555 (Jul 82) pp. 244 ff.]

One writer says that while commentators have long debated whether this benediction applies to God the Father or God the Son, Jesus Christ,

"It is best to view the designation as a blessed and inspired ambiguity--the glory and dominion belong to both God in Christ and Christ in God, forever and ever (cf. Pss. 104:31; 113:4; 138:5; Hab. 2:14; Matt. 17:2; John 1:14; 10:30; 2 Cor. 4:6; Col. 1:15; Heb. 1:3; 2 Peter 1:16-18). [MacArthur, 245]

ἡ δόξα (δόξα - \* Noun: Feminine Nominative Singular). Predicate Nominative.

καὶ τὸ κράτος (κράτος - power, might, strength \* Noun: Neuter Nominative Singular). Predicate Nominative.

Not that Peter wants Christ to have more power (he has it all!), but that all the powers of creation to be given more fully into Christ's service. Carries the idea of dominion (cf. the Disciples Prayer in Matt. 6:9-11).

εἰς τοὺς αἰῶνας (αἰών - \* Noun: Masculine Accusative Plural). τῶν αἰώνων, (αἰών - \* Noun: Masculine Genitive Plural).

Cf. 5:11 for a repeat of this doxology. for ever and ever—Greek, "unto the ages of the ages."

"Amen" is a transliteration (alike in Greek and English) of the Hebrew word meaning "so let it be." So used, it is not a wish but rather a strong affirmation, placing a seal of approval on what has just been said. Its use was common in the early Christian worship services as an expression of devout assent (cf. 1 Cor 14:16). The practice was adopted from the Jewish synagogue." [D. Edmond Hiebert, Selected Studies from 1 Peter. Part 3: Living in the Light of Christ's Return: An Exposition of 1 Peter 4:7-11. BSac 139:555 (Jul 82) pp. 244 ff.]

Cf. Hebrews 6:10 as a concluding idea.

## John Piper 1994 Sermon Transcript

### **The End of All Things Is at Hand**

What did Peter mean?

Let's begin with verse 7. Peter starts the paragraph, "The end of all things is at hand." What does he mean? Was he claiming to know and teach that Jesus would come back in a few months or years and end this age and establish the kingdom-so that he made a mistake in his prediction? Or was he teaching that Jesus could come back at any moment because everything that needs to happen before he comes had happened-and so his coming is near in the sense of being immanent? Or is there a third possibility?

#### He Wasn't Simply Mistaken

Interpreters with less confidence in the Scriptures have sometimes concluded that the apostles simply made a mistake when they said things like this-"the end of all things at hand." The end is near, they said, but the end was over 2,000 years away. So they made a mistake-the argument goes.

But for those of us who have come to trust in Scripture as God's word and believe that God did not allow his apostles to teach mistakes to the church, this is not so easy. And there are other reasons it's not so easy. One is that Peter was there in Acts 1:6 when the apostles ask Jesus if now is the time for the kingdom to be established. "Lord, is it at this time that you are restoring the kingdom to Israel?" Peter heard Jesus say, "It is not for you to know the times or epochs which the Father has fixed by his own authority" (Acts 1:7). Peter had been told that it was not his business to know when Jesus would come and establish his kingdom. His business was to do the Master's bidding till he comes-to spread the gospel to Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.

#### A Clue in the Word on Prayer

So what was Peter teaching about the end of all things in verse 7? The clue that I followed was the following word on prayer, "Therefore, be of sound judgment and sober spirit for the purpose of prayer." Peter connects the nearness of the end with the need for prayer. I think this points us back to the teaching of Jesus who did the same thing in Luke 21:36.

I invite you to look it up with me, so we can see it in context: "But keep on the alert at all times, praying in order that you may have strength to escape all these things that are about to take place, and to stand before the Son of Man." The point of praying for "escape" is not that Christians will be taken out of the world and not pass through the trouble Jesus is predicting. You don't need "strength" for that. He prays for "strength"-that they would be strong so as not to be spiritually and morally ruined by the end-time stresses. Two verses later in verse 34 he calls the coming end a "trap" for those who are weighed down with dissipation and drunkenness and the worries of life. That's what we need to have strength to escape from-the trap of worldliness as the end draws near.

So both Jesus and Peter connect the urgency of prayer with the drawing near of the end of the age. Peter was there when Jesus taught this and learned it from him. So let's stay with the context in Luke 21 for a few minutes and see how Jesus taught Peter and the others to think about the end of the age.

### Jesus' Teaching on the End of the Age

In verse 6 of Luke 21 Jesus predicts the demolishing of the Jerusalem temple: "not one stone will be left upon another." This prompts the disciples to ask (in v. 7) about the signs when these kinds of things would happen.

So Jesus mentions some things that are going to happen leading from then to the end. Verse 9: "And when you hear of wars and disturbances, do not be terrified; for these things must take place first, but the end does not follow immediately." Notice: Jesus is careful to say that these signs-wars and disturbances-are not immediately followed by the end. There is an undefined space of time. He is avoiding locking himself into a specific time frame.

In verses 10 and 11 he mentions wars again, as well as earthquakes and famines and terrors and some kind of cataclysmic signs in the sky or in space. Then in verse 12 he says something important about timing. Looking back on the wars and upheavals and famines and earthquakes, he says, "But before all these things, they will lay their hands on you and will persecute you . . . etc."

Notice the word, "before." So now you have another indefinite space of time implied: First there is the persecution that Peter and other disciples will experience (v. 12). Then there is "these things"- "before all these things" (v. 12)-namely, the wars and famines and earthquakes, etc. Then there is the end. And between these there is no set amount of time.

Then Jesus adds some more signs that will happen on the way to the end-still without getting specific about when they happen or how they are connected. For example, verse 20: "But when you see Jerusalem surrounded by armies, then recognize that her desolation is at hand." Then verse 24b: "Jerusalem will be trampled under foot by the Gentiles until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled." So the destruction of Jerusalem is part of what is coming before the end, and after that there will be this period of time, again of unspecified length, that has to be fulfilled-which Jesus calls "the times of the Gentiles."

### Peter Wasn't Saying Jesus Could Return at Any Moment

Now when Peter wrote 1 Peter, Jerusalem had not been destroyed yet. He died around AD 65 and Jerusalem was destroyed by the Romans in about AD 70. So it's hard for me to agree with the interpretation that says what Peter meant in 1 Peter 4:7 ("The end of all things is at hand") was that Jesus could come back at any moment. Jesus had said that Jerusalem would be destroyed first and then an undefined time of the Gentiles would elapse before the end of the age would come and he would return.

Besides the destruction of Jerusalem Jesus also said that world evangelization would take place before the end would come. For example, Matthew 24:14, "This gospel of the kingdom must first be preached in all the world as a testimony to all the nations; then the end will come" (cf. Acts 1:8).

And not only that, Jesus had told Peter what would happen in his old age, and so he predicted that Peter would get old. In John 21:18 Jesus said, "When you grow old you will stretch out your hands and someone else will gird you, and bring you where you do not wish to go." So Peter can't have believed that Jesus would return at any minute during his middle aged years of ministry. The Lord himself had told him how he would die when he was old.

And Paul warns against this view that Jesus might have returned in those days at any moment. Paul says, to the Thessalonians, "[The day of the Lord] will not come unless the apostasy comes first and the man of lawlessness is revealed" (2 Thessalonians 2:3). So he explicitly checks the spread of the view in his day that the Day of the Lord could have already come. He says there are things that yet have to happen before the day of the Lord can come.

### The End of All Things Is at Hand: An Interpretation

My suggestion, then, is that Peter means something like this when he says, "The end of all things is at hand":

"All around us there is intensifying persecution, as the Lord said there would be. There are rumors of wars. The horizon is dark for Israel, and the judgment on Jerusalem is near.

"Not only that, the gospel is spreading like wildfire as the Spirit is poured out. Paul was able to plant churches in all the major cities of Galatia in a matter of months. Now he has completed the frontier mission work from Jerusalem all the way around to northern Italy (Romans 15:19), and he plans to go to Spain. Hundreds, perhaps thousands, of other bands of missionaries are forming and going to the unreached.

"I don't know how big the world is. But if Pentecost is any indication, and if the success of Paul is any evidence, the world could be evangelized in not many years by God's great power. Brothers, the end is near-I'm not predicting when it will happen. I mean, the things that the Lord said must happen before he comes are taking place around us, and could be accomplished quickly-even in your lifetime.

"So be sober for prayer, because the great danger facing us is that we fall in love with this world and become spiritually dull and the day come upon us like a thief and we be destroyed. O pray, brothers, pray for the coming of the kingdom and for your strength to endure and escape the trap of spiritual apathy. Pray that you may be able to stand before the Son of Man."

And that's exactly the way I would talk about the coming of the Lord today. It is just around the corner. The end is near indeed. If anyone dallies with sin and the world, thinking, "I have lots of time," he plays the fool. The Judge is at the door. And the time remaining should be spent in earnest prayer that we not be made drunk and hard by the cares and pleasures of this world.

### A Word for Bethlehem: Warn Others in Love

This weighed on me all the way home yesterday from Brazil. I saw all those people in the Sao Paulo airport and the Miami airport and the Chicago airport and the Minneapolis airport-thousands and thousands of people who don't believe that the end is near. Or that there even is a Lord of history that

is guiding it all to an appointed end of judgment and salvation. I felt more ache for the lost than I had for a long time. May the Lord stir us up to warn as many people as we can-earnestly, lovingly, boldly.

That's a word from the Lord for us this morning. And there is one more-at least. Maybe you will hear something from this text that I don't even see.

#### A Word for Bethlehem: Love Covers over Sins

The other word for us comes from verses 8 and 9 about how to live together in the end time stresses. "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 [without grumbling]." I saw a connection between verses 8 and 9 that I hadn't seen before. And it made me think of where we are as a church.

Verse 8 says that our love needs to be the kind that covers each other's sins. In other words the focus is on the effect of love that enables fellowship in spite of sins. Isn't that remarkable?

Then in verse 9 Peter says that we should be hospitable "without complaint" or without grumbling. Grumbling about what? Maybe about the time and effort it takes to fix a meal or straighten the house. But don't you think he means grumbling about people. Love covers over sins. Let hospitality be without grumbling. Love says, "I'm just going to cover the things about which I could complain and grumble."

The Lord is ministering to us here. He's choosing the texts as we move through 1 Peter. If we want to, we all have ample reason to complain and murmur, don't we? Some feel that there are past sins in the way Dean and Leah were disciplined. Others feel there are past sins in the way the elders were treated. Others feel neither or both.

But God's amazing word to us this morning, I believe, is: love covers sins, so that hospitality-real heart-felt fellowship-can happen, not because we even agree on what the sins are-that's the amazing thing in this text-not because we finally decide what the real sins are, but because love covers them.

Peter is saying that bona fide, authentic love and fellowship is based, in part, on the covering of many sins. This is not sweeping things under the rug. It's not endorsing keeping skeletons in the closet. It's not renouncing church discipline. It's saying at least this-probably more: When we've done all the confrontation-when we've done all the argumentation and exhortation-we cover it. Whatever side we are on, we cover it; we give it up; we bury it as a cause of murmuring.

And then we turn together to God's future grace and take our united cue for Master Planning from verse 11: we will so live "that in all things God may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom belongs the glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen."

## Selected Studies from 1 Peter

### Part 3:

### Living in the Light of Christ's Return: An Exposition of 1 Peter 4:7-11

D. Edmond Hiebert

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BSac 139:555 (Jul 82) pp. 244 ff.

*The end of all things is at hand; therefore, be of sound judgment and sober spirit for the purpose of prayer. Above all, keep fervent in your love for one another, because love covers a multitude of sins. Be hospitable to one another without complaint. As each one has received a special gift, employ it in serving one another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God. Whoever speaks, let him speak, as it were, the utterances of God; whoever serves, let him do so as 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, NASB)*

The hope of Christ's return is an essential part of the believer's equipment for fruitful Christian living. In this passage Peter discusses aggressive Christian service in the light of the impending end. The anticipation of the Lord's return must have an impact on present Christian conduct.

In the face of persecution from without, believers, inspired by their hope of the future, must band together in loving service to each other to the glory of God. Peter here asserts that the end is near (v. 7a ), he delineates Christian living in view of the end (vv. 7b–11a ), and he points to the true goal of all Christian service (v. 11b ).

#### **The Assertion concerning the End**

"The end of all things is at hand" (v. 7a ) summarizes the Christian anticipation concerning the future. "Of all things" (Πάντων), standing emphatically forward, underlines the comprehensive nature of the end in view. The genitive "all" could be taken as masculine, "all men, all people"; in 4:17 reference is made to "the outcome for those who do not obey the gospel." But here this comprehensive term is best taken as neuter, "all things" depicting the eschatological end. "The end" (τὸ τέλος), the consummation of the present course of history, implies not merely cessation but also the goal toward which this present age is moving. It is the prophetic message of Christ's return.

It is unwarranted to limit this comprehensive designation to "the end of the temple, of the Levitical priesthood, and of the whole Jewish economy" in A.D. 70. Neither is it to be understood as a reference to the impending death in martyrdom awaiting the readers. These views offer no proper basis for the exhortations which follow.

The verb "is at hand" (ἤγγικεν) is used in the New Testament of the approach of the kingdom of God in relation to the First Advent (cf. Matt 3:2; 10:7 ; Mark 1:15, Luke 10:9, 11) as well as the Second Advent (Rom 13:12; Heb 10:25; James 5:8). The verb means "to approach, to draw near"; in the perfect



tense, as here, it portrays the event in view as having drawn near and now being in a position as near at hand, ready to break in. It thus depicts the return of Christ as impending. Newell characterized His return as “the next thing on the program.” Peter’s statement expresses the conviction of the early Christian church (Rom 13:12; 1 Cor 7:29; Phil 4:5; Heb 10:25; James 5:8–9; Rev 1:3; 22:20 ). Christ’s anticipated return was “always near to the feelings and consciousness of the first believers. It was the great consummation on which the strongest desires of their souls were fixed, to which their thoughts and hopes were habitually turned.”

The delay in the expected return of Christ did create a problem for some in the early church (2 Pet 3:4–7). Yet the passing of the centuries has not invalidated this hope. No dates for the return of Christ were revealed to the apostles (Matt 24:36); they did not know when their Lord would return; they were instructed to be expectant and ready for His return. They were not conscious of anything that expressly precluded such an expectation; much that they saw encouraged it.

It may be said that the lengthy time interval must be understood in the light of God’s chronology (2 Pet 3:8–9), not man’s. Peter’s assertion that the end is “at hand” and ready to break in expresses the Christian conception of the nature of the present age. With the Messiah’s first advent the reality of the eschatological kingdom broke on human history; but with the King’s rejection, His eschatological kingdom was not established. It awaits the day of His return. But that eschatological encounter introduced a new element into the nature of history. Human history now moves under the shadow of the divinely announced eschatological kingdom. Newman wrote as follows:

Up to Christ’s coming in the flesh, the course of things ran straight towards that end, nearing it by every step; but now, under the Gospel, that course has (if I may so speak) altered its direction, as regards His second coming, and runs, not towards the end, but along it, and on the brink of it; and is at all times near that great event, which, did it run towards it, it would at once run into. Christ, then, is ever at our door. As human history moves along the edge of the eschatological future, “it is always five minutes to midnight,” and “that edge at times becomes a knife-edge.” Only God’s long-suffering holds back the impending manifestation of that day (2 Pet 3:8–9). This consciousness must have an impact on present Christian living.

### **The Duties in View of the End**

“Therefore” (οὖν) grounds the duties now depicted in the consciousness of the impending end. In the New Testament this eschatological hope is frequently used to motivate Christian conduct (Matt 24:45–25:13 ; Rom 13:11–14; 1 Cor 15:58; 1 Thess 4:18; Heb 10:25; James 5:8–9; 1 John 2:28; 3:2). “The return of our Lord,” Erdman observes, “has always furnished the supreme motive for consistent Christian living.” The proper apprehension of this hope does not lead to uncontrolled excitement and fanatical disorder (cf. 2 Thess 2:1–3; 3:6–16 ) but rather to self-discipline and mutual service. Peter sets forth the believers’ duty concerning their personal life (v. 7b ) and describes proper community relations (vv. 8–11a ).

### **The Duty concerning Their Personal Life (v. 7b )**

“Therefore, be of sound judgment and sober spirit for the purpose of prayer.” Two aorist imperatives set forth the urgent and decisive nature of these personal duties. The first verb, “be of sound judgment” (σωφρονήσατε), was used of a person who was in his right mind as contrasted to one who was under the power of a demon (Mark 5:15; Luke 8:35). It was also used more generally of one who was

reasonable, sensible, and prudent, one who retained a clear mind. The readers are thus urged to be self-controlled and balanced in their reactions, able to see things in their proper place. Cranfield remarks, “The sound mind is equally far removed from the worldliness and unbelief of those who think to explain away the promise of Christ’s coming again, and from the fanaticism and sensationalism of those who would fain predict the hour of it and the manner.”

The second verb, “sober” (νήψατε), conveys the thought of sobriety as the opposite of intoxication. The Authorized Version renders this “watch,” but it is a watchfulness related not to sleepiness but to drunkenness. It is a call to remain fully alert and in possession of one’s faculties and feelings. The eschatological context of this passage indicates that they must “be free from every form of mental and spiritual ‘drunkenness’“ resulting from befuddled views and feelings about the future.

The two verbs, akin in meaning, are connected by “and” (και), marking a connection between the two duties. It is a question whether both imperatives or only the latter is to be connected with “for the purpose of prayer.” The former seems to be the intended view of the NASB, as quoted above. The NIV also supports this position by joining both verbs with prayer: “Be clear minded and self-controlled so that you can pray.” The ASV, by putting a comma after the first verb, keeps the two commands as distinct duties: (1) They must maintain a personal disposition of balance and self-control as they face life, and (2) they must be alert in mind and attitude so that they can pray. This author prefers the rendering of the ASV.

The phrase, “for the purpose of prayer” (εἰςπροσευχάς, “unto, with a view to prayer”) implies that prayer is a normal and expected activity of the Christian life, but it is easy to become distracted and unfitted for its performance. “Prayer” is a general term and includes prayer in all its aspects. But the original is plural, “prayers” of all kinds, both private and public. What follows suggests that they must maintain the practice of prayer in relation to their own lives as well as in their community relations.

### **The Activities in Their Community Relations (vv. 8-11a)**

The close connection between the personal and the brotherhood relations is underlined by the fact that verses 8–11, consisting of a series of participles, depend grammatically on the imperatives of verse 7. Although the participles are subordinate, the words “above all” (πρὸπάντω) make clear that the duties now enjoined are of primary importance. Peter urges the practice of fervent mutual love (vv. 8–9) and depicts two broad areas of mutual service (vv. 10–11a).

The duty of mutual love (vv. 8–9). “Keep fervent in your love for one another” (v. 8a). Peter has already mentioned love several times (1:8, 22; 2:17; 3:8). He fully realized its importance. “At a never-to-be-forgotten interview, the Master thrice reminded him that the supreme qualification for ministry was love.”

“Your love for one another” underlines the mutual nature of the love being urged. The noun “love” denotes a love of intelligence and purpose which desires the welfare of the one loved. The use of the definite article, “the love,” points to the love which they have already experienced. Its mutual character is underlined by the attributive position of “for one another” (τῆνεἰς ἑαυτου) before the word ἀγάπη, literally, “the into yourselves love.” Peter’s reflexive pronoun brings out the thought that they are all members of one body (cf. 1 Cor 12:12) and that love for other members promotes one’s own spiritual well-being.

Assuming that this love is already operative among them, Peter urges that their love must be “fervent” (ἐκτείν), “stretched out” and up to full capacity. The term was used to describe a horse at full gallop or to picture “the taut muscle of strenuous and sustained effort, as of an athlete.” “Keep” represents a present tense participle (ἔχοντες, “having” or “holding”) and indicates that they must maintain their mutual love at its highest level. Such love can be actively cultivated.

The words “because love covers a multitude of sins” (v. 8b ) justify the demand for fervent love. It has a beneficial impact on social relations because it “covers” sins. The meaning is not that love condones or hushes up sins, either before God or men. The reference here is not to sin in its Godward relations but rather to sins and failures in human relations. Love refuses deliberately to drag out the sins it encounters so as to expose them to the gaze of all; it prefers to refrain from and discourage all needless talk about them. It prefers to throw a veil over these sins, like the conduct of Shem and Japheth in throwing a covering over their father’s shame, in contrast to Ham’s viewing of it (Gen 9:20–23). This gracious action of true love promotes the peace and harmony of the brotherhood, and is the very opposite of hatred which deliberately exposes the sin in order to humiliate and injure. “Only when Christians become mean and ugly do they favor the devil by dragging each other’s failings out into the public and smiting each other in the face.”

Love’s action is necessary because believers are still weak and failing. In their close associations with each other in the brotherhood believers do, regrettably, encounter “a multitude of sins.” “Sins,” (ἁμαρτιῶν), “the most comprehensive term for moral obliquity” in the New Testament, basically denotes all that misses the mark in falling short of the standard of right; it may thus include sins of weakness and moral shortcomings as well as overt acts of sin. Love will deal with these sins according to the principles Jesus set forth in Matthew 18:15–17. Peter here is thinking of believers in their mutual relations and not of their individual personal relationships to God. It is unwarranted to assume, as some do (e.g., Moffatt), that such covering of sins wins forgiveness of one’s sins before God. That would be a form of salvation by works.

The command “Be hospitable to one another without complaint” (v. 9 ) widens the application of this principle of love. As indicated in Young’s literal rendering, Peter continues his directive without any verbal form: “hospitable to one another, without murmuring.” He thus names a positive expression of the presence of love.

“Hospitable” (φιλόξενοι) is a plural adjective describing those who have an affectionate concern for strangers, which expresses itself in offering them food and shelter. The practice of hospitality was highly valued in the early church and it is frequently mentioned in the New Testament (Rom 12:13; 16:1–2 ; 1 Tim 3:2; Titus 1:8; Heb 13:2; 3 John 5–8; cf. Matt 25:35). This fruit of brotherly love strengthened mutual ties among the churches, often widely scattered. Without its practice the early missionary work of the church would have been greatly retarded. When travelers or delegates from other churches arrived, their hospitable reception was regarded as a matter of course (cf. Acts 10:5–6, 23; 16:15 ; 21:15–17 ). Believers who were on journeys found it highly desirable to find lodging in Christian homes, fostering mutual fellowship and strengthening the ties between churches. Even more important was it for believers to find refuge in Christian homes whenever they were fleeing from their persecutors.

But Peter’s use of the reciprocal pronoun (ἐἰς ἀλλήλους) implies that hospitality within the local group is involved. Since there were no separate church buildings for the first two centuries, each local

congregation met in the home of one of its members (cf. Rom 16:5, 1 Cor 16:19; Phile 2). This practice put their hospitality to a practical test.

“Without complaint” (ἀνεγρογγυσμου) is a frank recognition that the practice of hospitality could become costly, burdensome, and irritating. The Greek term denotes a muttering or low speaking as a sign of displeasure. It depicts a spirit the opposite of cheerfulness. Such a spirit negates the value of the hospitality rendered and destroys the recipient’s enjoyment of it. It is a ministry to be shouldered cheerfully if it is to be worthwhile. The addition simply emphasizes the true character of Christian hospitality and does not imply that Peter’s readers were chronic grumblers.

The duty of mutual service (vv. 10–11a). The thought now passes from mutual love to mutual service. The participle construction again ties this picture of Christian service to what has gone before. Verse 10 describes the ministry of the believers individually as stewards serving the needs of the household of God with the means their Master has entrusted to them.

“Each one” (ἕκαστ), standing emphatically first, stresses that the duties and functions of a steward have been assigned to each believer. Each member of the body of Christ has been entrusted with at least one gift (1 Cor 12:7; Eph 4:7). Each member has his own distinct function, “as each one has received a special gift.” “As” (καθὼ, “just as”) indicates that the service of each one is to be governed by the nature of the gift received. Since each member has received a gift, it is clear that these gifts are not offices in the church. The term “gift” (χάρισμα), derived from the same root as “grace” (χάρι), basically denotes something that has been bestowed freely and graciously. The term includes any capacity or endowment which can be used for the benefit of the church. It is not to be restricted to miraculous gifts; included is any “natural endowment or possession which is sanctified in the Christian by the Spirit.” Each should be employed as an expression of Christian love.

Each must employ his gift “in serving one another.” The reflexive pronoun (ἑαυτου) again points to the mutual benefit when these gifts are used for the sake of the whole body of Christ. God has made the members interdependent, what benefits others has a reflexive benefit for the one exercising the gift. The participle “serving” (διακονοῦντε) denotes any beneficent service that is freely rendered to another.

All must minister in the personal consciousness of being “good stewards of the manifold grace of God.” Christians are “stewards,” not owners of the means and abilities they possess. A steward was one to whom property or wealth was entrusted to be administered according to the owner’s will and direction. He was entrusted with its use, not for his own enjoyment or personal advantage, but for the benefit of those he served. This entrustment involved responsibility and demanded trustworthiness (1 Cor 4:2). “As good stewards” means that they not merely resemble but actually are such; they must render their service in a noble and attractive manner.

Each believer has his share in ministering “the manifold grace of God.” The collective singular, “the grace of God,” comprehends all the gifts graciously bestowed, while the adjective “manifold” (ποικίλη) displays the “many-colored” gifts in their infinite variety. The Lord of the church has distributed His

bounty with masterly variety to enable His people successfully to encounter the “manifold trials” (1:6 ) to which they are subjected.

In verse 11a Peter divides these gifts into two functional categories: the speaking gifts and the service gifts. The two categories are given in two conditional sentences, but no verbal form is expressed in the conclusion, which the Greek did not feel essential. In English one feels compelled to insert some verbal form, either an imperative, “let him,” or a participial form.

“Whoever speaks” (εἴ τι λαλεῖ, “if anyone speaks”) assumes the speaking function in operation. The verb may be general, simply denoting use of the faculty of speech; it is frequently used in the New Testament of teaching and preaching, and so here the speaking may be in the form of teaching, prophesying, or exhorting. While speaking in the assembly seems primarily in view, the verb is broad enough to include speaking outside a church setting, such as ministering to the sick, or personal communication.

Speaking “as it were, the utterances of God” (ὡς λόγιθεου) marks the necessary subjective feeling of the speaker as he exercises his gift. He must be conscious that what he says is God’s message for the occasion. In classical Greek the λόγια were the utterances or responses of some deity. In the Septuagint the term is often used of “the Word of the Lord,” and elsewhere in the New Testament it has reference to the Old Testament Scriptures (Rom 3:2; Acts 7:38; Heb 5:12). Here the sense seems to be that the speaker utters his message with the consciousness that he is giving not merely his own opinion but God’s message under the leadership of the Spirit.

“Whoever serves” (εἴ τι διακονεῖ) seems best understood as including all forms of Christian ministry other than speech. The one rendering the service (τις, “any one”) is again left entirely indefinite. It is unwarranted to limit the reference to the office of the deacon, as Demarest does. The context simply limits the service to the realm of deeds.

“By the strength which God supplies” is a timely reminder that Christian service must be rendered in a spirit of humility and divine enablement. The one serving must avoid the conceit that the strength and ability to perform the service are his own. If his service promotes the well-being of the brotherhood, he must realize that this ability is “by” (ἐ, “out of”) divine enablement (cf. John 15:4). God abundantly “supplies” (χορηγεῖ) the needed strength to carry out His work. In classical Greek the verb was used of paying the expenses of a chorus in the performance of a drama; since the performance reflected on the prior provision of all that was needed, the term came to denote supplying in abundance. Christian service must be humbly yet aggressively performed in full reliance on God’s enablement.

### **The Goal in Christian Living**

The added purpose clause, “so that in all things God may be glorified” (v. 11b ), declares the true goal in all Christian living. The comprehensive “in all things” (ἐν πᾶσι) is best understood as looking back to the entire paragraph. All that they have and do must magnify “God” (ὁ θεὸς), the God whom they now know and serve. He is the Fountain of all their gifts and blessings. In all they are and do, they must desire to thank Him and to extol and ascribe honor to His name.

“Through Jesus Christ” is a reminder that only through the reconciliation achieved in Him can God be truly glorified (cf. 1:21 ; 2:5 ; 3:18 ). “There is only one way to God, and our incense must be scattered on coals taken from the true altar, or it can never rise up acceptable and pleasing to Him.”

Peter’s own grateful heart moves him to glorify God: “to whom belongs the glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen.” The use of the indicative verb “belongs” (ἔστί, “is”) marks his words as an assured declaration, not merely a devout wish.

“To whom” may refer to either Jesus Christ or God the Father. In favor of Jesus Christ is the fact that He is the nearer antecedent here and that in Hebrews 13:20–21; 2 Peter 3:18; and Revelation 1:5–6 the glory is ascribed to Christ. In favor of God the Father is the fact that He is the subject of the sentence. Best cites three considerations in favor of God the Father as the intended antecedent:

- (i) The reference to the glorification of God in the preceding clause links with “glory” here;
- (ii) The majority of NT doxologies are offered to God, and in particular the very similar doxology of 5:11 is offered to him;
- (iii) To speak of glorifying God “through Jesus Christ” and then to speak of glory belonging to Christ seems odd.

It is preferable to take God the Father as the subject of this doxology.

God is magnified as possessing “the glory and dominion” (ἡδόξα καὶ τὸ κρά). The definite article in the Greek with both nouns marks them as separate and distinct possessions, rightfully belonging to Him. He possesses “the glory,” the radiant majesty and sublimity characteristic of deity, and He exercises “the dominion” (κράτο, “might and power in action”), marking Him as the sovereign Ruler over all.

To Him belong the glory and the dominion “forever and ever” (εἰς τοὺς αἰῶνας αἰών), literally, “unto the ages of the ages.” This strengthened form of “forever” emphasizes the thought of eternity in the strongest way. The expression depicts eternity as “a series of ages flowing on endlessly, in each of which a number of other shorter ages are gathered up.”

“Amen” is a transliteration (alike in Greek and English) of the Hebrew word meaning “so let it be.” So used, it is not a wish but rather a strong affirmation, placing a seal of approval on what has just been said. Its use was common in the early Christian worship services as an expression of devout assent (cf. 1 Cor 14:16). The practice was adopted from the Jewish synagogue.

This brief paragraph is significant as offering insight into Peter’s understanding of Christian life and service. For him the hope of the impending return of Jesus Christ was a living reality. But he firmly held that this eschatological hope must promote loving Christian relations and faithful Christian service. The hope of the future is to have a sane, sanctifying impact on the present. In waiting as well as in serving, the true goal of the Christian life must ever be to glorify God.