

Serving God in the Last Days

I Peter 4:1-11

Introduction:

- The last days began when Christ ascended in Heaven, and continues now as we await His imminent return
- V. 7- Peter believed Christ could return at any moment- and so should we!

I. Separation and Holiness- v. 1-6

a. Arm yourselves with the same mind that Christ had

- i. The same mindset, resolve, and thoughts
- ii. I Cor 2:16 says, "...But we have the mind of Christ."
- iii. I Peter 1:13- the mind is often a neglected battlefield for many Christians
- iv. Christ was ready and willing to suffer
- v. Christ ceased from sin- he released himself from sin and its power- and so are we!
- vi. When a person suffers physical persecution for the sake of Jesus, it almost always profoundly changes their outlook regarding sin and the pursuit of the lusts
- vii. Hiebert observes that the phrase has ceased from sin "Depicts the spiritual state of the victorious sufferer. It carries a note of triumph; he has effectively broken with a life dominated by sin. It need not mean that he no longer commits any act of sin, but that his old life, dominated by the power of sin, has been terminated."
- viii. We have two choices- sin or suffering

b. Now we are walking in God's will- v. 2-3

- i. Live with an attitude of holiness
- ii. Peter realized we have all spent enough time living like the world. Now we are called to live like Christians. It is a profound and foolish waste of

time for Christians to live like the world, and we must simply stop being double-minded

1. We must get to the point where say- ENOUGH!
2. See Eph. 2:1-3

c. V. 4- Separation from worldly crowd's deeds, and the consequences of those deeds

- i. If we take the long look, we would never choose that lifestyle
- ii. Lasciviousness/Lewdness- means to live without any sense of decency, or moral restraint, especially in regard to sexual immorality
- iii. Lusts- gratifying unlawful appetites
- iv. Excess of wine/Drunkenness- there is a close link between drunkenness and immorality
- v. Revellings and banquetings- worldly parties, dances, proms, night clubs, other questionable places and venues.
- vi. Abominable idolatries- worship of idols, including the tradition of immorality that is associated with this worship
- vii. See I Peter 1:13-16
- viii. V. 5-6- They will give an account to Him who is ready to judge: When this account is required, all who live in the sins Peter described will clearly see how foolish they have been
- ix. V. 6- may refer to martyrs who are believed while living and are vindicated now in their death. The gospel results in 2 things for the believer- blame of men and the approval of God
- x. See John 5:24, 11:25-26

II. Serving in the Last Days

a. (1Pe 4:7) In the last days, Christians should live with an attitude of serious prayer.

- i. As we see the eternity rushing towards us, we dare not take the need for prayer lightly. Some are watching, but not praying!

- ii. Be on guard, with prayer
- b. V. 8- Live with fervent love for the brethren
 - i. “Where love abounds in a fellowship of Christians, many small offences, and even some large ones, are readily overlooked and forgotten. But where love is lacking, every word is viewed with suspicion, every action is liable to misunderstanding, and conflicts about – to Satan’s perverse delight.” (Grudem)
 - ii. Love everyone, but especially in the context of our church fellowship- avoid cliques!
 - iii. Use hospitality- invite folks over for dinner, make new members feel welcome
- III. Steward God’s grace appropriately (v. 10)- The idea is that if we are bad stewards of the manifold grace of God, it is as if that grace was given to us in vain. That grace is wasted, because it only comes to us and doesn’t move through us.
 - i. We should be channels of God’s blessings! Illustr- smelly pond where everything comes in, but nothing goes out.
 - ii. I Cor. 12 describes some of the gifts we all have as believers.
 - iii. We are to be using those gifts to serve the Lord!
 - iv. 10-11- As we serve one another, we do it with the strength God provides, the ability which God supplies – so that to Him belong the glory and the dominion forever and ever.
- b. 10-11- If anyone ministers, let him do it as with the ability which God supplies: Every part is important; each has its job to do. Even the smallest, seemingly least important part of the body of Christ is important.
 - i. A man was rebuilding the engine to his lawn mower, and when he finished, he had one small part left over, and he couldn’t remember where it went. He started the engine and it ran great, so he figured that the part was useless – until he tried to stop the lawn mower, and it

wouldn't stop! Even the smallest, seemingly least important part of the body of Christ is important.

- c. V. 11- The preacher, and any servant, does the work according to God's grace and gifting. The preacher for example, is not to just use his opinions or talents, but preach the Word- Thus saith the Lord!

Conclusion:

- May we find ourselves being obedient to Christ, serving, and praying as we see the Day approaching!