

How are we supposed to live while we wait for Christ to return?

This was essentially the subject of our Sunday school class last week as we unpacked 1 Peter 4:7-11.

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

Peter penned these very practical words for the people of Asia Minor, encouraging the churches in that region to live in light of the fact that Jesus would be coming back soon. Knowing that when he returned, he would judge all peoples, Peter wanted his Christian brothers and sisters to be clear-headed so that they would be able to pray rightly while living in their broken world. Referencing Psalm 34 back in 1 Peter 3:12, Peter reminded them,

**For the eyes of the Lord are on the righteous,  
and his ears are open to their prayer.  
But the face of the Lord is against those who do evil."**

If they were pursuing righteousness, they would have nothing to fear and their prayers would be heard.

Additionally, they were to love, be hospitable toward and serve "one another". Peter was calling them to genuinely love the brethren, to incorporate love for one another into their everyday lives. Hospitality and service through the use of God given gifts were to be woven into the fabric of their Christ-centered community. They were, **"to live for the rest of the time in the flesh no longer for human passions but for the will of God" (1 Pet 4:2)**, just as Christ did.

What I had hoped to share in Sunday School last week, yet was unable to, I will share with you now. During the very days in which I was preparing to teach from 1 Peter 4:7-11, I was hearing of these "one anothers" being lived out during the final days of Jason Jones life. What a blessing it was to me to hear of Rich Cork, Terry Bixler, and Jonathan Brown heading to the hospital to be with Jason's family and friends, reading scripture, talking about Jesus, praying, and singing songs. These men set aside everything on their busy schedules to love their brother Jason and his family. Denis and Noelle Carol were of the same mind, driving to the hospital in order to come alongside and mourn with those who mourn, bringing hospitality with them as they went (biblically, as much a mindset/attitude as a specific action limited to sharing a meal or providing a bed), the gifts of help and mercy in tow.

Living for God together was on display this week, Christian and non-Christian alike seeing the love of Christ lived out in a difficult situation. Both Jason's father and Don (the president of Jason's motorcycle

chapter) were able to witness our brothers and sisters faithfully serving, faithfully doing good in simple yet profoundly Christian ways - God's varied (multi-colored) grace shining among various (multi-colored) trials.

God was glorified in this!

And though Jason was not revived, our hope is that he has now begun living in the spirit the way God does (1 Pet 4:6), so that for all eternity he can experience being in Jesus' presence, worshiping and glorifying his name, the very thing Peter wanted the believers in that day to remember was so near.

Someday soon I hope we will all be able to join in the heavenly chorus of Revelation 19:6-9,

**Then I heard what seemed to be the voice of a great multitude, like the roar of many waters and like the sound of mighty peals of thunder, crying out,**

**"Hallelujah!**

**For the Lord our God**

**the Almighty reigns.**

**Let us rejoice and exult**

**and give him the glory,**

**for the marriage of the Lamb has come,**

**and his Bride has made herself ready;**

**it was granted her to clothe herself**

**with fine linen, bright and pure"—**

**for the fine linen is the righteous deeds of the saints.**

**And the angel said to me, "Write this: Blessed are those who are invited to the marriage supper of the Lamb." And he said to me, "These are the true words of God."**

Until he comes to take us home, may we live for God together so that He may be glorified now and forever more! Amen.

Pastor Brad