

1 PETER 4:7-11 | THE END OF ALL THINGS

- Verse 7 –
 - Peter uses the same language that John the Baptist used of the Kingdom of God, saying that **the end of all things is at hand**.
 - There is no way to take this outside of its plain sense: *Peter believed that they were living in the last days*.
 - Because of this, he must have believed that the Gospel of the Kingdom had been preached worldwide, for Jesus had given this as a requirement (see Matthew 24:14). Indeed, Peter himself was proclaiming this Gospel through this very epistle, and was sending it to **Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia** (1 Pet. 1:1), places far away from Jerusalem.
 - Peter's message to his scattered followers was *very much* the Gospel of the Kingdom (compare 1 Peter 1:13-17).
 - Note that he does not say that the **end of all things** is *here*, but rather it is **at hand**.
 - Compare the same Greek word in a similar context in James 5:8, where it is translated **draweth nigh**.
 - Because the Gospel of the Kingdom had been proclaimed worldwide, and yet the Jewish nation had not yet repented, there would soon be a tribulation (see v. 12 and following).
- Verse 8 –
 - It is interesting that both Paul and Peter put **charity** as **above all things** (compare 1 Cor. 13:13).
 - In any dispensation, **charity** is in order.
 - The word **charity** is a translation of ἀγάπη [agape]. However, the English word *love* is too broad and unfortunately the word *charity* has lost its original meaning of *uniquely Christian love as an expression of the heart of Jesus Christ*.
 - The Oxford English Dictionary defines charity as “The Christian love of one's fellow human beings; Christian benignity of disposition expressing itself in Christ-like conduct.”
 - While both Paul and Peter use nearly the same terminology, Peter alone says that **charity shall cover the multitude of sins**.
 - The word **cover** is καλύπτω [kalupto], which is *to conceal or cover up*.
 - James uses the term similarly in James 5:20.
 - Such a theological concept has no place in the dispensation of Grace but does fit within the “good works” message of the Gospel of the Kingdom of which Peter speaks.

- Some interpret the words **charity shall cover...** to mean that those who love do not “tattletale.” While that may be true, it seems to go against many principles of Scripture, and certainly would not work in places like James 5:20.
 - Harry Ironside’s comment on this passage: *“The world hates believers. This is all the more reason why they cling to one another in love, even though they cannot be blind to the faults of others, but love covers the multitude of sins, rather than exposing and holding them up to censure.”* (Expository Notes on the Epistles of Peter).
- Verse 9 –
 - In the final days, showing **hospitality one to another** would be essential, and **grudging** would be an easy attitude into which to fall.
- Verse 10 –
 - Some say that **the gift** to be *the gift of hospitality*, connecting the verse to verse 9.
 - However, there is no place in the Bible which speaks of hospitality as a *spiritual gift*.
 - The closest would be the gift of **ministry** mentioned in Romans 12:7.
 - Note that the whole “industry” of spiritual gifts teaching is built on evangelical dreams rather than Biblical exegesis.
 - The Greek does not include a definite article for **gift**, thus it could be correctly translated *a gift* or **the gift** (the absence of a definite article does not mean that it cannot be included in English since the usage of the article is different in Greek than English).
 - I take this statement to refer to a **gift** is general, not specific to hospitality.
 - Spiritual gifts were, in my interpretation, given to the Jewish believers as a manifestation of God’s kingdom offer.
 - Thus, the recipients of Peter’s letter each (note that **every man hath received the gift**) had a gift that they were to use.
 - Spiritual gifts were for **the perfecting of the saints** (Eph. 4:12), thus were Kingdom/Israel related.
- Verse 11 –
 - Solidifying the idea that **the gift** (v. 10) is general in nature, Peter now speaks of two various gifts in verse 11, prophecy and ministry.
 - These two gifts (and all others) were to be carried out **that God in all things may be glorified through Jesus Christ**.