

## PERSPECTIVE FOR LIVING UNDER SUFFERING

(4:7-11)

- V. 7a** Considering the Great Contrast in v. 6... now a broader perspective for our understanding,
1. The **end of all things**... What is meant by the “end.”
    - a. Not the end of time but the conclusion of the present course of history will be goal completed by a new order when Jesus returns. (1Cor.15:24-28)
  2. **“Is near”** The perfect tense views the end as impending, having drawn near and now in a **position to break in**. This goes along with the assertion of verse 5 “ready to Judge.”
    - a. Used to describe the approach of the Kingdom of God- Matt 3:2; 10:7; Mark 1:15; Luke 10:9-11.
    - b. The second coming- Romans 13:12; 1Cor.7:29; Phil. 4:5; Heb. 10:25; James 5:8-9; Rev. 1:3; 22:20
  3. His anticipated return was...
    - a. Always near in their minds, however NO DATE was revealed to the apostles Matt. 24:36;
    - b. The **big question** we have...why the delay? Peter considered this 2Peter 3:4-7;
    - c. The length of time and interval is on God’s time clock... not ours 2Pet.3:8-9
    - d. Jesus’ instructions were **“be ready”** Matt. 24:44; Luke 12:40

**Question:** How are you preparing (readying) yourself at this time?

- V. 7b** The fact they will try and shame us, falsely accuse us, we need to be responsible by being
1. **Clear minded**- see things in their proper proportion.
  2. **Self-control**- full possession of their mental faculties and feeling. Literally not become intoxicated- not just wine, but not be carried away in a frenzy of ideas about your state in life or the ideas about “the end.” Why, so that it does not hinder you from being...
  3. **Given to prayer**. Evidently more than a casual thing, but a normal part of life. (3:7)
    - a. Being preoccupied with carelessness and fear will hinder our prayer life which is vital to our endurance under suffering. (2Cor. 11:3)

**V. 8-9** Responsible living under suffering requires activity among the community of believers that will support it.

1. Above all... **Love deeply**. Seen as mutual and willful, something beyond convenient, feeling, and abstract theory. (Love mentioned already 1:8,22; 2:17; 3:8)
  - a. Use of the definite article “the love” tell of the reader experience in it already.
  - b. **One another** does not use a reciprocal pronoun, but a **reflexive pronoun**, has to do with “identification” as a whole and our being part of one body.
2. Peter gives two basic ways of expressing this love...**Love is, as love does!**
  - a. Love’s example- **covers a multitude of sins**, from Proverb 10:12; and James 5:20
    - i. Our Love cannot atone for sin; neither can we afford to be blind to sin.
    - ii. We should not expose or broadcast sins to be stir up among believers.
    - iii. Noah’s son Ham’s exposing him (Gen 9:20-23) shows not love but pride and resentment.

- iv. When the church make public confession mandatory or brings out the failing of others it will not be a place of support, peace and love. (1Cor. 13:5-7 love choses silent and bears all things.)
- b. Love's example- **showing hospitality** is another expression of love. (Phileo &
  - i. The church meeting existed to demonstrate this. It was a requirement of its leadership (1Tim 3:2) and it is commanded for us all (Rom 12:13)
  - ii. And to be done "**without grumbling**" denotes the task can be difficult. Strong family oriented home/culture, adds responsibility and bring uneasiness.

**V. 10-11** During times of suffering, Love's example- comes in variety of ways... by Grace!

- 1. **All** have **received by grace** something of which they can use in serving the community.
  - a. To be a good steward means we are aware of what it is and we used it to serve other and not just ourselves.

**Question:** What hinder people from recognizing this?

- b. Variety should be seen in this... not a uniform or the elevating of one of a few obvious gifts. (The widow mite)
- 2. Peter will use two general categories of these graces/gifts- speaking and serving
  - a. **Speaking**- covers all forms of oral serving: teaching, preaching, prophesying and tongues.
    - i. But the parameters are drawn. This not a mater of personal inspirations or private interpretation, **BUT** the very word/oracles of God.
    - ii. What one say is to be what God said, not what the person say. (1Thess 2:13)
  - b. **Service**- all forms of serving other than through speech- by God's enablement, or how He abundantly supplies... the needed strength and resources.
    - i. Those serving must avoid the conceit of thinking that the resources and enablement are their own... they are stewards of what God has given them.
    - ii. This will be obvious in whether or not their serving draws attention to them self or Christ.
    - iii. The service done will build up the community, and not the just the person serving. (Negative example from 3John 9: Diotrephes, love to be first)
  - c. God is given glorified in all things, when...
    - i. God's dominion is seen in all that we are and do
    - ii. And when Christ is central to all of us.

So the community is more than a meeting we attend, it is a functioning community where we see ourselves practically participating in it.