

The End is Near(er) **1 Peter 4:7–9 (NKJV)**

7 But the end of all things is at hand; therefore be serious and watchful in your prayers. 8 And above all things have fervent love for one another, for “love will cover a multitude of sins.” 9 Be hospitable to one another without grumbling.

The end of times has always been a favorite theme for Christians, especially when passing through troubling time.

I remember back in the 70's when I was in seminary there were many authors telling everyone that the end of the world was fast approaching. And that it was upon us.

Some even went to making predictions that failed to come true.

The things that were happening then were indicators that the end was coming soon.

Even Peter in his day said, “The end of all things is at hand.”

I received a book this week called “Is this the end?” by David Jeremiah written in 2016.

In his introduction he writes.

“In 2011, I wrote a book titled *I Never Thought I’d See the Day*. In that book I discussed the changes occurring in America that, in my younger days, I never dreamed possible. Throughout the first half or more of my life, the principles of Christianity provided the underpinnings of our culture. That foundation was laid two centuries earlier, and most of us thought it was too solid and enduring ever to crack.

“But crack it did. As I wrote in that book, I never thought I’d see the day when marriage would be obsolete, morality would be in free fall, and the church would become irrelevant to society.

“But now, only five years later, I almost think I wrote that book too soon. The changes that shocked me then were soon to grow even more appalling. In the ensuing half-decade since that book, those cracks that riddled America’s foundation have spread into gaping fissures, and many more have appeared. Morality in the United States is no longer in free fall; it has hit bottom. In today’s America, anything goes. Christianity is no longer merely pushed aside; American Christians are now experiencing overt repression and even persecution. Civility in politics and tolerance of opposing ideas has disappeared. Corruption and dishonesty in government is rampant and open. Race relations are deteriorating, earnings are declining, civic disorder is accelerating, and the national debt is beyond control.”

But look at us now. Things are so much worse.

And even though Peter wrote about this 2000 years ago, he has some important things to tell us.

I. But

A. This little word ties this back to the previous paragraph.

1. They think it strange that you do not run with *them* in the same flood of

dissipation, speaking evil of *you*.

- a. The people to whom he was writing lived in a terribly wicked world.
 - b. They did not have the advantage of the influence of Christianity for 20 centuries.
 - c. Christians were considered strange because they had abandoned the wickedness of their day.
 - d. Instead their lives were filled with doing God's will.
2. They will give an account to Him who is ready to judge the living and the dead.
- a. Peter reminded them that there was a payday coming.
 - b. That the God that they served would one day bring about a final judgment upon this sinful world and its inhabitants.
 - c. 2 Peter 3:11–12 (NKJV)
 - (1) ¹¹ Therefore, since all these things will be dissolved, what manner *of persons* ought you to be in holy conduct and godliness, ¹² looking for and hastening the coming of the day of God, because of which the heavens will be dissolved, being on fire, and the elements will melt with fervent heat?
3. For this reason the gospel was preached also to those who are dead, that they might be judged according to men in the flesh, but live according to God in the spirit.
- a. That is why we preach the gospel and warn people.
 - b. 2 Corinthians 5:20 (NKJV)
 - (1) ²⁰ Now then, we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God were pleading through us: we implore *you* on Christ's behalf, be reconciled to God.
 - c. Colossians 1:28 (NKJV)
 - (1) ²⁸ Him we preach, warning every man and teaching every man in all wisdom, that we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus.

II. The end of all things is at hand

- A. Why does Peter say this under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit since it has been almost 2000 and Jesus has not returned.

1. 2 Peter 3:3 (NKJV)
 - a. 3 knowing this first: that scoffers will come in the last days, walking according to their own lusts,
 2. Acts 2:17 (NKJV)
 - a. 17 ‘And it shall come to pass in the last days, says God, That I will pour out of My Spirit on all flesh; Your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, Your young men shall see visions, Your old men shall dream dreams.
 3. Hebrews 1:2 (NKJV)
 - a. 2 has in these last days spoken to us by His Son, whom He has appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the worlds;
 4. John 6:39 (NKJV)
 - a. 39 This is the will of the Father who sent Me, that of all He has given Me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up at the last day.
 5. 2 Timothy 3:1 (NKJV)
 - a. 1 But know this, that in the last days perilous times will come:
 6. To these New Testament writers they had seen the beginning of the last days.
 7. And they had no reason to believe that those days would be delayed as long as they had.
 8. Therefore we are still in those last days.
- B. They had no reason to believe that there were other things that needed to happen before the Lord could return.
1. We hear people speaking about the last thing to happen as though Jesus could not return until that was accomplished.
- C. The return of the Lord has always been imminent.
1. Romans 13:12 (NKJV)
 - a. 12 The night is far spent, the day is at hand. Therefore let us cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armor of light.
 2. 1 Thessalonians 5:2 (NKJV)
 - a. 2 For you yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so comes as a thief in the night.

3. Revelation 16:15 (NKJV)
 - a. 15 “Behold, I am coming as a thief. Blessed is he who watches, and keeps his garments, lest he walk naked and they see his shame.”
4. Revelation 22:20 (NKJV)
 - a. 20 He who testifies to these things says, “Surely I am coming quickly.” Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus!

III. Therefore be serious

A. Most people think we are at the amusement park.

1. 4993 σωφρονέω [sophroneo /so·fron·eh·o/] v. From 4998; TDNT 7:1097; TDNTA 1150; GK 5404; Six occurrences; AV translates as “be in right mind” twice, “be sober” twice, “be sober minded” once, and “soberly” once. 1 to be of sound mind. 1a to be in one’s right mind. 1b to exercise self control. 1b1 to put a moderate estimate upon one’s self, think of one’s self soberly. 1b2 to curb one’s passions. *James Strong, Enhanced Strong’s Lexicon (Woodside Bible Fellowship, 1995).*

B. Luke 12:42–46 (NKJV)

1. 42 And the Lord said, “Who then is that faithful and wise steward, whom his master will make ruler over his household, to give them their portion of food in due season? 43 Blessed is that servant whom his master will find so doing when he comes. 44 Truly, I say to you that he will make him ruler over all that he has. 45 But if that servant says in his heart, ‘My master is delaying his coming,’ and begins to beat the male and female servants, and to eat and drink and be drunk, 46 the master of that servant will come on a day when he is not looking for him, and at an hour when he is not aware, and will cut him in two and appoint him his portion with the unbelievers.

IV. And watchful in your prayers.

A. The word watchful is similar to the word serious.

1. When we realize how much God has to do with our lives, our prayers will be more watchful.

V. And above all things have fervent love for one another,

A. For "love will cover a multitude of sins."

VI. Be hospitable to one another without grumbling.

We will look at these later.