

The End Is Near

Long Beach Alliance Church • January 27th, 2008 • Pastor Chris Lankford

**THE END OF ALL THINGS IS
NEAR; THEREFORE, BE OF SOUND
JUDGMENT AND SOBER SPIRIT FOR
THE PURPOSE OF PRAYER. ABOVE
ALL, KEEP FERVENT IN YOUR LOVE
FOR ONE ANOTHER, BECAUSE
LOVE COVERS A MULTITUDE OF
SINS. BE HOSPITABLE TO ONE
ANOTHER WITHOUT COMPLAINT.
~ 1ST PETER 4:7-9 (NASB)**

1) Keep The Dead Man Buried

- A) Peter reminds followers of Jesus to embrace suffering for the sake of Christ when dealing with sin (the "old man", 1st Peter 4:1-2, cf. Colossians 3:9-11). This is not to say that we pursue suffering, but to be prepared for it when it happens.
- B) Our "new man" is to desire the "will of God" (1st Peter 4:2), rather than return to the "old man" and the "lusts of men" (4:3-4).
- C) This effort, though, is not easy. Not only do we resist suffering for the sake of Christ, but we also experience significant external pressure to sin (4:4).

- D) As an encouragement to followers of Christ, Peter reminds us that judgment is coming from the Lord on all men (4:5), to beware of a philosophy of "live today, for tomorrow you may die" (4:6).
- E) Rather than live in this fashion, followers of Jesus Christ are to live with the end in mind (4:7), living in a way which reveals and examples Jesus Christ (glorifies Him) in every action, word, and deed (4:7-11).

2) I Have Decided To Follow Jesus...

- A) The extent of this life was so extreme for the follower of Christ in Asia Minor (cf. 1:1), that some were being tortured, perhaps with fire (4:12) for their public relationship with Jesus Christ. This indicated that social pressure (4:4) was turning to violence and torture (4:12-13).
- B) The question for followers of Jesus is begged, "To what extent do I follow Jesus?" The answer? "To the same extent in which Christ has suffered for you" (4:13-14).
- C) The name of Jesus is to be kept in such honor and purity, Peter even warns followers of Christ to be authentic in suffering for Christ, never mixing sin with righteous suffering (4:15-16).
- D) The difficulty of following Jesus Christ in a hostile culture is eloquently addressed with a clear call to righteous living which directs people to see and observe Jesus, to trust our lives to the perfect judgment of God, even in the face of terrible suffering, and to know that God is faithful and will make right all those things this world makes wrong (4:17-19).