

Living with the End in View

1 Peter 4:7-11

PART FOUR

Introduction

The Primacy and Specifics of Love

"Above all, keep loving one another earnestly... Show hospitality to one another without grumbling" (v8,9).

"Let brotherly love continue. Do not neglect to show hospitality to strangers" (Hebrews 13:1-2).

Love expressed through hospitality is the necessary fiber that knits us together in Christian community.

"above all these put on love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony/unity" (Colossians 3:14).

"being knit together in love" (Colossians 2:2).

Love is "a union, and therefore it is called a bond or a chain that links things together...not a mere external union.... but a union of hearts" (Leighton).

Love does not isolate, it extends. Love is vulnerable. It opens itself up to others. Love shares its life.

Jesus the Servant God

Jesus came "in the form of God," He "made himself nothing, taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. And being found in human form, he humbled himself" (Philippians 2:6, 7-8).

*"he was/being" Gk *huparcho*; "involves continuing to be that which one was before. Nothing appeared that was not an objective reality from the beginning" (Zodhiates, 997).*

"in the form of God...taking the form of a servant"

*"form" Gk *morphe*; "presumes an objective reality. No one could be in the form (*morphe*) of God who was not God. It is the utterance of the inner life, a life that bespeaks the existence of God" (Zodhiates, 997).*

*"likeness of men" Gk *homoioma*; 'shape, similitude.'*

*"human form" Gk *schema*; 'fashion.'*

Jesus works

Servant = "one who is under obligation to work for the benefit of a superior, and to obey his commands."

Jesus was a carpenter by trade. Jesus worked – both as the *Son of Man* and as the *Son of God*.

"My Father is working until now, and I am working" (John 5:17).

"Do you not believe that I am in the Father and the Father is in me? The words that I say to you I do not speak on my own authority, but the Father who dwells in me does his works" (John 14:10).

“God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and with power. He went about doing good” (Acts 10:38).

God works, and so should we.

“We must work the works of him who sent me while it is day; night is coming, when no one can work” (John 9:4).

The work that Jesus did left an example for us to follow.

“so as to walk in a manner worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing to him, bearing fruit in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God” (Colossians 1:10).

“Now there was in Joppa a disciple named Tabitha” who “was full of good works and acts of charity” (Acts 9:36).

The widow is to have “a reputation for good works: if she has brought up children, has shown hospitality, has washed the feet of the saints, has cared for the afflicted, and has devoted herself to every good work” (1 Timothy 5:10).

“Likewise, urge the younger men to be self-controlled. Show yourself in all respects to be a model of good works” (Titus 2:6-7).

God the Father worked in Jesus. Now Jesus works in us to continue the work of God.

“Now may the God of peace who brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, the great shepherd of the sheep, by the blood of the eternal covenant, equip you with everything good that you may do his will, working in us that which is pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory forever and ever. Amen” (Hebrews 13:20-21).

Our Aim as Servants

Aim for many.

Jesus had the power to accomplish anything He set His mind to. He preached truth to thousands people. He fed thousands of people. He healed thousands of people (cf. Matthew 4:23-25).

He could have acquired a vast treasure of wealth to draw from to accomplish His purposes. But He had “nowhere to lay his head” (Matthew 8:20).

Our Attitude as Servants

Be satisfied with one.

Heaven is always beyond our grasp. Serve the Lord with joy, even if only one soul is affected (cp. Nicodemus, Samaritan woman, Philip, Nathanael, Thomas, Peter, Martha and Mary, et al).

“Christ did not work on the scale of a thousand, or on the scale of ten, but on the scale of one. Companionless men were born, and companionless they must be born again” (George H. Morrison).