

1Pet 4.7—Pursuing Holiness in Light of Christ’s Return, Part 1

Introduction

- I. It’s important to see how vv.1-6 and vv.7-11 relate.
 - A. In vv.1-6 we’re called to pursue holiness by putting off sin. In vv.7-11 we’re called to pursue holiness by putting on righteousness. This is because Christ’s sanctifying of us includes not only the death of our old man of sin but the birth in us of a new life alive to holiness (2Cor 5.17; Rom 6.5-14; WLC 75).
 - B. In vv.1-6 it’s the death of Christ that impacts our daily lives. In vv.7-11 it’s the return of Christ that impacts our daily lives.
 - C. In vv.1-6, Peter tells us to live in the present in light of the past. In vv.7-11 he tells us to live in the present in light of the future.

Give yourself to prayer, v.7

- I. Peter calls us to be self-controlled.
 - A. It’s a call to a sound mind and carries the idea of being watchful and clearheaded. We’re to have a watchful attitude of mind that lives every day waiting for the Lord’s return, Mt 25.13.
 - B. There are several things we need to be watchful over.
 - 1. We need to be watchful over our sinful hearts because they’re ready at any moment to spring forth into iniquity, cf. v.3. If we drop our armor and go to sleep on our watch our sin won’t miss the opportunity to act out, Rom 7.18, 23.
 - 2. We need to be watchful over this sinful world. It’s constantly beckoning for us to leave off pursuing heaven and instead settle here on earth. We need to maintain a healthy, godly suspicion of the world because those who love it don’t have the love of God in them, 1Jn 2.15-17.
 - 3. We need to be watchful over our spiritual enemy who prowls around like a roaring lion seeking to tempt us to a life of sin against God, 1Pet 5.8.
 - C. The reason for this watchfulness is because the end of all things is at hand. Christ is coming back! Acts 1.11; Rev 22.20.
 - 1. If this world has a shelf-life and is about to expire then what should immortal souls like us do? Peter says we should be watchful unto prayer, Hab 2.1; Ps 27.14; 121.1.
- II. Peter calls us to be sober-minded.

- A. It’s a call to keep a clear head—the direct opposite of the drunkenness that used to characterize us (v.3), cf. Eph 5.15-17.
 - B. We’re in danger of being distracted by the busyness and cares of life to the point that we forget the shortness and purpose of it. So Peter calls us to a sobriety that acts with temperance toward food and drink, with wisdom toward the world’s good things, and with moderation toward the gifts God gives us to enjoy, cf. Lk 21.34.
 - C. The reason is because the end of all things is at hand. All we see and have is passing away, 1Jn 2.17. So we need to be on our guard against falling in love with a world that’s dying and forgetting that we’re going to long outlive it, Ecc 11.9.
 - D. The Lord’s imminent return and the end of all things is to have a determinative impact and influence on our daily lives.
 - 1. We’re to be faithful in our calling, diligent in our duties, earnest in the spread of the gospel, and earnest in our ongoing pursuit of Christian maturity, but every day ready to leave it all, Lk 12.35-43.
- III. The reason we’re to be self-controlled and sober-minded is because they equip us to be a people given to a life of prayer.
 - A. You can’t commune with God in prayer when you’re drunk with the things of this life and asleep on your watch.
 - 1. A sensual heart in love with this present world is too weighed down with the cares of life to lift itself up to the throne of grace. A worldly heart can’t pray because its joys are on earth.
 - B. Peter’s call to watchfulness and sobriety in life is because there’s only one way to be sure we’re ready for the Lord’s return, and that’s to be a people who prayerfully watch for it, 1Th 1.9-10.

Conclusion

- I. Are you a person of prayer? Are you praying to be ready for Christ’s coming? Can you say with the church in Rev 22, “Come quickly”? Are you regularly joining with the church when it gathers to seek God’s face and make ready for His return? When Christ comes, will He find you in a prayerful frame, or drunk and asleep?
- II. Are you ready for the end of all things? Are you ready to say goodbye to all of life and stand before God? Are your heart’s joys here on earth or in heaven where Christ is?
- III. If your heart’s become caught up with this world, repent and fix it again on Christ and His imminent return, Rev 22.20.