

Exiles – Faithful Living in Faithless Time

Living During the End

1 Peter 4:7-19

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One of the questions we ask when there is corporate/national/global suffering – “*Is this the end?*”
We often feel like we are living in UNPRECEDENTED times.

Big Idea: We prepare ourselves not for the events of the end, but for meeting Jesus, therefore we live soberly, prayerfully and lovingly.

1 Peter 4:7-19 - Reminder: Peter is writing to the church of Christ, scattered because of persecution.

“Don’t be surprised...”

ERROR: Many people believe that before the Kingdom comes, there will be tribulation.

TRUTH: These are not HISTORICAL as much as they are BIOGRAPHICAL. The two dimensions of the Christian life are the tribulation and the kingdom. These are SIMULTANEOUS realities.

We are therefore not SURPRISED by SUFFERING (ie. Tribulation). Instead, we use it to EXERCISE our faith and EMPOWER our witness.

The end IS near. THEREFORE...

- CULTURE: Only crazy people say, “the END is NEAR.”
- TRUTH: The irony is that if the end is near, be sane, be clear-minded.

Be ENGAGED with what’s going on in the world. Not intellectually disengaged or emotionally overcome, but PRAYERFULLY. In every “age”:

- There will always be attempts by some to validate everything by claiming Christ’s approval.
- There will always be attempts by some to destroy the work of Christ in the name of human flourishing.
- There will always be attempts by some to provide a worldly salvation from whatever threat is most obvious.

8 Above all, maintain constant love for one another, since love covers a multitude of sins - This maintain of constant love for one another speaks to Peter’s assumption of consistency within the church, where LOVE is not TRANSACTIONAL. The assumption is that the LOVE within the church will move past LET DOWN.

9 Be hospitable to one another without complaining. - Be present and attentive to one another with vulnerability and humility

10 Just as each one has received a gift, use it to serve others, as good stewards of the varied grace of God. - At whatever time in history we are living, the call is the same: SERVE OTHERS. The gospel is DECLARED and DEMONSTRATED.

The End is near, therefore:

- Cultivate a vision of HEAVEN - This will detach you from the things of the world. It will free you from ENVY, and for CONTENTMENT.
- Cultivate a balanced view of the WORLD - That the world is worth saving. That there is great evil and good. That the church’s role in it is to proclaim redemption, not rejection.
- Cultivate a relationship with JESUS - This will develop a desire to see him face to face rather than by faith. Learn to recognize His voice. We will HEAR Him before we SEE Him.
- Cultivate a commitment to your CHURCH – The church proclaims the Kingdom that came, comes, and is coming. Together, we TESTIFY to the RESURRECTION.

Date: April 6th, 2025

Series: Exiles – Faithful living in Faithless Times

Title: Living During the End

Primary Passage: 1 Peter 4:7-19

Secondary Passage: Matthew 24:6-8

Big Question: How do we prepare ourselves for the end?

Big Idea: We prepare ourselves not for the events of the end, but for meeting Jesus, therefore we live soberly, prayerfully and lovingly.

Keywords: End, Recency Bias, Kingdom, Tribulation, Sanity, Prayerfully, Engaged, Hospitality, Gifts.

GOING DEEPER Questions:

Where did you see Christ working around you this week? What made hope difficult?

How often do you think about the “end?” How do you picture it happening?

Read 1 Peter 4:7. What does Peter mean when he says: ***the end is near?*** Do you believe him? How does he say to prepare for the end? When do you struggle to be “sober-minded?” How does having a vision of the end inform your prayers?

Read 1 Peter 4:8-11. What stands out to you about these verses? If you were a part of the persecuted church, how would you receive his direction? What is Peter hoping to produce in the life of the believers?

How do you maintain constant love? What makes love difficult or dangerous for you?

How would you define “be hospitable?” How does hospitality demonstrate the gospel? How have you used your gift to serve others in Jesus’ name?

Who in your life, either in the church or in the community, needs to see or hear the gospel through your gift? Pray for opportunities to do that, and the faith to follow through.