Good Morning!

Today we will be looking at 1 Peter chapter 4 and verse 7 begins with “The end of all things is at hand…” I think it wise to pay attention to any verse that begins that way!

Since we know that that verse was written around 65AD, he did not mean that the world was coming to an end. He was looking for the Lord’s return, but he probably did not mean the Lord’s return was due in the next few years. Since he may have been in Babylon at the time of this writing and we know he died in Rome about 67AD, so he probably wasn’t looking at his own death.

I believe this was the attitude of a man who knew his death [John 21:18-19] and had come to look at all things as just an interlude before Heaven. He knew he would be killed for his faith. That means that you are not going to live out your life into old age and die in your bed surrounded by family and friends. It will all come to an end - suddenly.

Therefore he had that advantage of knowing in a personal way that all these things down here are temporary - temporary, but not unimportant. So he writes, “Be of sound judgement.” Know what is important; what is eternal and what isn’t. Prayer is important. When we enter into the throne room of God in Revelation we see at the opening of the scroll of judgement (5:8) and at the beginning of judgement (8:3-5) the prayers of the saints plays a significant role. Your prayers are represented as incense in a golden bowl treasured before the Lord ‘until the time.’ Then, in some way, they are instrumental in the final justice of God. We are not told how our prayers are significant, but it is enough to know that they are, and that they are treasured by our God.

Peter says in verse 8, “Above all be fervent in your love for one another, because love covers a multitude of sins.” This was a man who was at a meal where Jesus said, “A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another, even as I have loved you, that you also love one another. By this all men will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another" (John 13:33-35). He understood the significance of love in the people of the church. He also did not mean that the covering of sin was the ignoring of sin. Believers are people known for loving people who sin against them – even when that reaches a level that is “a multitude of sins.” We love our enemies (Lk. 6:27).

Be hospitable within the church. May your love be evident because you show it in many ways. May the world marvel at the love that the brethren have for one another.

In the overwhelming grace of God, you have been given a gift. It is a gift to you from God. It is a gift in that He blesses us in the giving and the giving. The first giving is in that God so considered us worthy of His interest that He gave us this gift. For the lovers of the Chronicles of Narnia, it is like the sword given to Peter, the bow given to Edmund, the horn given to Susan, and the vial of healing given to Lucy. They were gifts, but gifts to be used for the Lord’s business. Simply put – our gifts are not our gifts – they are the Lord’s gifts. We are to be His instruments even when we don’t feel like it. We are blessed in the second giving – when we give. We are not blessed when we don’t use that gift. If you have a gift and you are not using it, then you are saying that God made a mistake in giving it. There aren’t any excuses for ignoring God’s gift in you. We are to use it whenever we can, even to our enemies.

We are to pray, love and serve, “so that in all things God may be glorified through Jesus Christ.” Peter did not know the day of his death, but he did know what would come after that. “Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His great mercy has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to *obtain* an inheritance *which is* imperishable and undefiled and will not fade away, reserved in heaven for you.” 1 Peter 1:3-4

In Jesus Christ, to whom belongs the glory and dominion forever and ever.

Pastor EA