

1 Peter 4:1-11

Stewardship Pt. 2

Image Church // Members of the Kingdom: Week 6

Introduction

Good morning Image Family! So glad to be back...

- *Grateful for the Elders that preached while I was away! Can we celebrate them*

Listen, I also want to **celebrate Kids Camp**... *We got some pictures to show you...*

- Had an amazing turnout... This place was bumping... Lots of new folks... Kids here from surrounding businesses...
- Had 1 profession of faith!!!
- Want to thank those of you that served. Special thanks to Nikki... *Can we put our hands together*

Alright, well we're continuing our series called **Members of the Kingdom**, where we're walking through the core values of our church...

- Those values are **worship, family, stewardship, and missional living**...
- We're taking 2 weeks to look at each of them...

Pastor José preached an incredible message on **stewardship** last week out of **Matthew 25**, showing us how **biblical stewardship requires an accurate understanding of the Master**

- And when we know the Master, it leads to the stewardship of our time, talent, and treasure...

This week we want to keep building on that as we look at this idea of Stewardship from a little bit different angle... *The goal is that you have a well-rounded view of these values and the implications that come from them so we can live them out together!*

- If you're new, we want you to know what we're about...
- If you're here and you're not a Christian, we want these values to point you to the heart of what Christianity's all about...

So, if you have your Bible go ahead and turn to 1 Peter 4...

I don't know how many of you kept up with the **Titan submarine** that went missing several weeks ago on *June 18th* in an attempt to see the Titanic...

- My wife and I were captivated by it...
- At the beach at the time, so it felt even more significant... Esp because we were at a beach on the Atlantic Ocean...
- Spent time watching and waiting...
- On Thursday, June 27th, the news broke that the Titan had lost pressure and imploded, and the lives of everyone on board were lost...

Such a tragic loss... The people on there had no idea that it was coming... They had no chance to say goodbye, no chance to get things in order... nothing... Just a tragic situation...

Not trying to be morbid... And it got me thinking about how we're not promised tomorrow... We don't know when our last day is going to be, we just know that there will be one...

- *I did a quick Google search, and the death rate in America is right around 100%...*

So all that we can do between now and the end is **steward** the time that we have... Because at the end of the day, we don't own time...

- We can't because we don't exist outside of it, we exist in the midst of it...

So the question we need to ask ourselves is **how are we going to steward the remaining time we have left in this life?**

Is there a right way to steward it? Is there a lasting way that we can steward it?

1 Peter 4:1-11

Therefore, since Christ suffered in the flesh, arm yourselves also with the same understanding—because the one who suffers in the flesh is finished with sin—

IOW: Christ suffered to save your soul, we're called to be willing to embrace suffering in this life, by enduring in faith in the midst of an opposing world...

- The suffering Peter's talking about is being willing to go against the status quo, going against the grain of culture...

IOW: Doing things God's way isn't going to be as easy as doing things the world's way, and so there will be opposition that comes with following Jesus...

- But our endurance through the opposition proves that we're Christ-followers... *Finished with sin-* transitioned from sinner to saved...

Now watch what Peter says next in **verse 2**: *here's why we want to endure, here's the goal:*

²in order to live **the remaining time** in the flesh no longer for human desires, but for God's will. ³For **there has already been enough time spent** in doing what the Gentiles choose to do: carrying on in unrestrained behavior, evil desires, drunkenness, orgies, carousing, and lawless idolatry.

Peter's saying the goal is to steward the remaining time we have in this life by living for God, **not** following the ways of the world...

- Stewardship isn't only about certain areas of our life its about all of life...

And there's a little sarcasm here... *He's like: you've already wasted enough time living like the world in your days before Jesus...*

What Peter does here divides the Christian life into **2 parts**, life **before** Christ and life **after** surrendering to Christ...

- **BTW**, this is why it's biblically impossible to say that you've always been a Christian...

Peter holds up the **old** and the **new** here.

And his call is to **allow Christ to shape the remaining time that you have in this life!**

Here's the first thing I want you to see: **Stewarding your life starts by laying aside your old ways...**

- **Surrendering to Jesus...** GOSPEL
- *This changes our pursuit and perspective... BIG!*
- *Life is not long about us, our pleasure, our desires, our career, our job...*
- It's about Jesus

***Struggling with stewardship is a Lordship issue...**

- *Appeal...*
- Stewardship is really about surrender...

The world serves a different lord... What Peter's pointing to is countercultural, and it's why *I think* Peter says to endure the opposition, the world is going to press and ask questions...

- Like why?
- **Verse 4:** the world will be surprised that you're not joining in...
 - And they're going to say you're missing out...

But that's not the case... Peter points to God's coming judgment in **verses 5-6 on those who aren't surrendered to Jesus...** And then look at **verse 7...** We're going to see why we're not missing out and what our motivation is to steward our lives for Christ...

He says: **The end of all things is near;**

Seriously?!? What's Peter talking about here? He's talking about the return of Jesus...

See, the gospel is that Jesus came to become our **perfection** in his life and our **punishment** in His death, paying the debt that we owed, laying down His life in our place...

And then, in His **resurrection**, He gives us new life, setting us free from our sin and separation from God through faith in his finished work...

BUT Jesus' **resurrection wasn't the end**, it marked the beginning of God's promise to one day make all things new... Jesus dealt with our **sin** and **separation**, making a way for us to be with God, but he's not yet dealt with the broken and depraved world around us...

- There's still hurt, pain, death, tragedy, and natural disasters, all of which are a direct result of the brokenness that sin caused when it entered the world...

But watch this, He's what we're waiting on... **Revelation 21:3-5 says, Look, God's dwelling is with humanity, and he will live with them. They will be his peoples, and God himself will be with them and will be their God. 4 He will wipe away every tear from their eyes. Death will be no more; grief, crying, and pain will be no more, because the previous things have passed away. 5 Then the one seated on the throne said, "Look, I am making everything new."**

This is the end Peter's talking about... And the point is that this **future reality that should shape how we live today...**

Steven Covey, in his book **7 Habits of Highly Effective People**. He says:

Begin with the end in mind... And he goes on to say that *Beginning with the end in mind means starting with a clear understanding of your destination. It means to know where you're going so that you better understand where you are now so that the steps you take are always in the right direction.*

Peter's **beginning with the end here** in order to shape how we live each day...

Because here's the reality, what you believe about the future will shape how you steward your life today.

Let me give you an example: *When I take my wife to Trader Joe's...*

- It could be an *all-day event*... And here's the thing, I could run over to CFA and get an ice cream cone, but if I do that and Ashley comes out of Trader Joe's, and I'm in the drive-through line, *we're going to have a problem*... So I don't go to CFA...
- *Truth is, I could have gone to CFA 3 times!* But I wait as if she could come out at any moment...

*See, the reality of the fact that Ashley could walk out at any moment impacts the decisions that I make while I wait...

- *I steward the time differently!*

The same is true for us as it relates to Jesus... The reality of His coming at any moment should impact the way that we're living in the meantime while we wait...

And in that same way, I had to say **no** to CFA ice cream, and the way I had to consider the *implications of my actions so that I could be ready for that which was most important*, that there's going to be things that we have to say **no** to in this life in order to say **yes** to what's most important...

There's going to be priority shifts, there's going to be a reorientation of how we live.

See, it's one thing to say **that you believe Jesus is going to return**... A lot of people are there... But it's another thing to live like this is actually true...

- For many, Christianity is **a** thing. It's not **the** thing...
- It's something your steward your life for...

Stewardship, how you leverage the time you have left on this earth, is a marker of genuine faith...

*Alright, let's pick back up in **verse 7** because Peter's going to show us what stewarding the time we have left practically looks like...*

7 The end of all things is near; **therefore**, [now here's how you should live] **be alert and sober-minded for prayer.**

This is to be: soberly wise, clear-minded, not under the control of any substance, emotion, or desire, self-controlled...

- Only way this happens is when Jesus is at the center... Jesus brings peace, consistency, and stability, making this possible...

Here's the purpose: ***So that you can PRAY!***

So stewarding the time we have left means that we:

Orient our lives around the things of Christ, so we pray like Christ

The first thing Peter points us to here when it comes to stewardship is prayer...

- Prayer isn't a last resort, it should be our first response...
- Prayer is a key way that you connect with God...
 - Not just to fill God in, but also the way He fills you up...
- Prayer keeps us tethered in faith...
- Jesus modeled this so well for us... He was constantly praying... If anyone didn't need to, it would be Him, and yet He didn't neglect it...

Peter's first concern, given the end is coming, is prayer... That should say something to us... Is prayer our first concern?

Verse 8:

8 Above all, maintain constant love for one another, since love covers a multitude of sins.

The next thing we see here when it comes to stewarding the time we have left is that we're to **Pursue love at all costs**

Peter says **above all** maintain **consistent** love for one another...

- Love is the mark of the Christian life...
 - Love that saved us... Love to us, love through us...
- ***This is not loving because we have to do this for God... This is love because of what we have received from God!***
- The kind of love God shows us doesn't hold wrongs against us... It doesn't show off our behavior...
 - Same should be true for us...

Which is why Peter says that ***maintaining constant love covers a multitude of sins.***

IOW: consistent love in the face of sin preserves unity... The heart of what Peter's saying here is our call to the preservation of unity within the church...

- Unity is what we have experienced with God... It overflows to one another...
- The gospel love makes gospel unity possible...

Verse 9:

9 Be hospitable to one another without complaining.

Stewarding the time we have left means that we're to be:

Be hospitable to one another without complaining

Welcoming fellow believers...

- Peter was probably talking about welcoming into their home since the church didn't have a building...

Hospitality is the love of strangers, but can also be a welcoming presence toward others...

- But to be fair, strangers don't mean you don't know them...

Serving on the weekend, this is OUR HOUSE... We want to welcome one another...

- *Appeal...* **SERVE**, host CG...

God welcomed us through Christ, who laid aside everything for us...

Verse 10:

10 Just as each one has received a gift, use it to serve others, as good stewards of the varied grace of God.

Steward the gift God's given you for the purpose of serving others

Let me start here with this... As a Christian, you have a gift... *No "if"...*

God's grace has been poured out through gifts as a means for you to display His grace to others... So, when you serve, you're being *distributors* of, or *stewards* of the grace that God's given you through the gifts that you have...

- You're saying God's served me with His life, so I will serve others...
- You're saying, what I have, has been given to me by God, so I want to use it in a way that points people back to Him...

Notice here that this *isn't optional* by the way... That if you're a Christian, not only do you have a gift, but it's to be used to serve others for the purpose of displaying God's grace...

- Which means that ***if we're not serving others then we're not stewarding that which Jesus died to purchase for us...***

So, let me just stop and ask you: ***how are you leveraging the gift that God's given you?*** Are you leveraging your gifts to serve others, or are you using your gifts to serve yourself??

- See ***we will always fail to serve others when we forget about the reality of Christ's return...***
- Why? ***Because our focus shifts from His coming to our earthly concerns...*** It becomes about us, and not about Him...

- It's so easy for us to fall into this...

What does the way we leverage our gifts show our kids about what we believe about the future?

What does the way we leverage our gifts show the people around us about what we believe about the future??

That the future is uncertain, grab all we can now, build it all, save it all, for today... Or are we showing them that we have confidence in a future hope that goes beyond this life...

Now some of you are thinking ***well, how do you know what your gift is?***

- What do you enjoy doing, and how can you leverage it to serve others??
- What are you good at, and how can you leverage it through the church?

Some of you just need to start somewhere...

This is going to cost you time... But again, when we have the right perspective, it changes everything!

11 If anyone speaks, let it be as one who speaks God's words; if anyone serves, let it be from the strength God provides, so that God may be glorified through Jesus Christ in everything. To him be the glory and the power forever and ever. Amen.

This is a Doxology: Doxa- glory, praise to God...

*The final thing we need to see when it comes to **stewardship** is this:*

Stewarding our lives means that we're to **Be about God's glory and not our own**

The way that we do that:

- Being about His word... **Plug for core class...**
- Living out of His power... *Christ to us, Christ through us...*
 - *Not I have to do it...*
- Being about His praise...
 - Want people to be a people that worships Jesus!
 - We want to ascribe glory!

Conclusion [VAMP]

May have noticed internal language when it comes to stewarding our lives... Intentional...

Here's what Peter's after... A new community of people who together are all stewarding their lives for the glory of God... The church...

- This is why this is a core value for us...

Not only that, but we can do out there what we can't do in here!

In here bleeds out there!!

When we put into practice what Peter's pointed us to we will be putting on display the glory of God, being a beacon of hope...

Jesus is coming back!

Non-Christian...

PRAY