

1 Peter 4:7-11

This past Sunday as we held a memorial service for David Evans, Lee Kidd said, **"There's no such thing as an atheist in a foxhole"**

Harold Nelson contracted West Nile Virus.

We even saw it in the Bible.

Luke 23:41-43 "And we indeed are suffering justly, for we are receiving what we deserve for our deeds; but this man has done nothing wrong." And he was saying, "Jesus, remember me when You come in Your kingdom!" And He said to him, "Truly I say to you, today you shall be with Me in Paradise."

**There is something about having the end in sight
That causes a person to zoom in on what is really important.**

**Of course we know this is the case for a lost person.
BUT IT SHOULD ALSO BE FOR A BELIEVER**

**In our text this morning, Peter is talking about
How a Christian should have focus in the final hour.**

PETER MAKES A SOBERING STATEMENT

Verse 7, "The end of all things is near;"

We are talking about "the end of all things"

**This is something we as believers in our day and time
Had better come to grips with.**

The reason the end is so scary is because of the finality

Zek cries every night at the finality of the movie.

**THE FINAL END IS NEARLY HERE,
AND JUDGMENT IS COMING WITH IT**

Hebrews 9:27 "And inasmuch as it is appointed for men to die once and after this comes judgment."

Revelation 20:11-15 "Then I saw a great white throne and Him who sat upon it, from whose presence earth and heaven fled away, and no place was found for them. And I saw the dead, the great and the small, standing before the throne, and books were opened; and another book was opened, which is the book of life; and the dead were judged from the things which were written in the books, according to their deeds. And the sea gave up the dead which were in it, and death and Hades gave up the dead which were in them; and they were judged, every one of them according to their deeds. Then death and Hades were thrown into the lake of fire. This is the second death, the lake of fire. And if anyone's name was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire."

1 John 2:17a "The world is passing away..."

**There is coming a complete and final end to this world.
An end that will consummate in judgment.**

SOME DAY, GLOBAL WARMING IS GONNA SEEM VIVIDLY REAL

2 Peter 3:10-13 "But the day of the Lord will come like a thief, in which the heavens will pass away with a roar and the elements will be destroyed with intense heat, and the earth and its works will be burned up. Since all these things are to be destroyed in this way, what sort of people ought you to be in holy conduct and godliness, looking for and hastening the coming of the day of God, because of which the heavens will be destroyed by burning, and the elements will melt with intense heat! But according to His promise we are looking for new heavens and a new earth, in which righteousness dwells."

AND PETER SAYS IT IS NEAR

YOU SAY, "Ah preacher, Peter thought it was near and that was 2000 years ago, should I really expect this to happen in my lifetime?"

I want you to see what Jesus said.

Matthew 24:4-8 "And Jesus answered and said to them, "See to it that no one misleads you. "For many will come in My name, saying, 'I am the Christ,' and will mislead many. "You will be hearing of wars and rumors of wars. See that you are not frightened, for those things must take place, but that is not yet the end. "For nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom, and in various places there will be famines and earthquakes. "But all these things are merely the beginning of birth pangs."

*Did anyone else in here hear about the **Tsunami** that hit last December?
Did anyone else in here hear about the **hurricane** that hit New Orleans?
Did anyone else in here hear about the **mudslides** in the Philippines?
Did anyone else in here hear about the terrorists that took out the **twin towers**?*

Sounds like the beginning of the end to me.

Matthew 24:32-35 "Now learn the parable from the fig tree: when its branch has already become tender and puts forth its leaves, you know that summer is near; so, you too, when you see all these things, recognize that He is near, right at the door. "Truly I say to you, this generation will not pass away until all these things take place. "Heaven and earth will pass away, but My words will not pass away."

Matthew 24:36-39 "But of that day and hour no one knows, not even the angels of heaven, nor the Son, but the Father alone. "For the coming of the Son of Man will be just like the days of Noah. "For as in those days before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noah entered the ark, and they did not understand until the flood came and took them all away; so will the coming of the Son of Man be."

**I realize it was 2000 years since Peter wrote these words,
But in 2000 years look how real it has become.
"The end of all things is near"**

Do you realize that any minute,

*Jesus is going to return,
Judgment is going to sweep upon this world,
Tribulation so severe is coming that if it weren't cut short, even the elect
wouldn't survive.
Hell is going to open wide her jaws and scores of lost souls will be forever
bound in torment.*

Any minute, the choice will be gone, and eternity will be set.

I used to have a T-shirt that said,

"Judgment day, you stand before the throne of God, you've breathed your last breath. No more time, no more excuses; still no fear?"

We must realize "the end of all things is near".
BECAUSE the nearness of the end ought to motivate how we are living.

Because the end is near,
I'm going to show you five attributes that believers must focus on.

#1 A PROPER PERSPECTIVE

1 Peter 4:7b

Peter says, the end is near, so pay attention.
"be of sound judgment and sober spirit"

"sound judgment" translates SOPHRONEO

it means "be in ones right mind" or to correctly assess yourself.

Romans 12:3 "For through the grace given to me I say to everyone among you not to think more highly of himself than he ought to think; but to think so as to have sound judgment, as God has allotted to each a measure of faith."

In other words, you had better make sure what you are.
Don't pretend to be a disciple of Jesus if you really aren't.

2 Corinthians 13:5 "Test yourselves to see if you are in the faith; examine yourselves! Or do you not recognize this about yourselves, that Jesus Christ is in you — unless indeed you fail the test?"

"sober spirit" translates NEPHO
relates to being spiritually alert.

Peter is telling you to get real with yourself and recognize the times.

Matthew 24:42-44 "Therefore be on the alert, for you do not know which day your Lord is coming. "But be sure of this, that if the head of the house had known at what time of the night the thief was coming, he would have been on the alert and would not have allowed his house to be broken into. "For this reason you also must be ready; for the Son of Man is coming at an hour when you do not think He will."

The command is simple.

Open your eyes and realize what is going on around you.
It does a Christian no benefit to be oblivious to the facts that are evident.

If you were on a sinking ship,

It would do you little good to just refuse to recognize that the ship is going down.

Because of the distress of the times,
It is imperative that Christians have a proper perception.

And there is a reason we need it.

"be of sound judgment and sober spirit for the purpose of prayer"

You need to be perceptive of what is going on
So you will know how to pray.

If you're unaware of the danger, you won't be as quick to ask for help
Christian the end is near we need a proper perception.

#2 A PROPER PERSPECTIVE

1 Peter 4:8

Not only do we need to rightly perceive the danger that is real,
We need to have a proper perspective of ourselves.

Peter says, "determine to place yourself and your needs behind the needs of others."

There is something about reaching end
That causes people to only focus on self.

If a time bomb was dropped into this sanctuary this morning...

The end is upon us, we must make sure
To sacrifice ourselves for the safety of others.

Call it evangelism, call it world missions, call it ministry.
This whole world is going down, we must show love to others.

Why?

"because love covers a multitude of sins."

Love has a unique ability to lead people to forgiveness.
Jim Elliot and his friends wouldn't shoot...

It is the end, we must work on behalf of others.

Paul's second letter to the Corinthian church
Gives a peak into Paul's loving heart.

2 Corinthians 4:7-12,15 "But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, so that the surpassing greatness of the power will be of God and not from ourselves; we are afflicted in every way, but not crushed; perplexed, but not despairing; persecuted, but not forsaken; struck down, but not destroyed; always carrying about in the body the dying of Jesus, so that the life of Jesus also may be manifested in our body. For we who live are constantly being delivered over to death for Jesus' sake, so that the life of Jesus also may be manifested in our mortal flesh. So death works in us, but life in you...For all things are for your sakes, so that the grace which is spreading to more and more people may cause the giving of thanks to abound to the glory of God."

2 Corinthians (-21 "Therefore, we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God were making an appear through us; we beg you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God. He made Him who knew no sin to be sin on our behalf, so that we might become the righteousness of God in Him."

2 Corinthians 12:14-15 "Here for this third time I am ready to come to you, and I will not be a burden to you; for I do not seek what is yours, but you: for children are not responsible to save up for their parents, but parents for their children. I will most gladly spend and be expended for your souls. If I love you more, am I to be loved less?"

Paul gave himself for the Corinthians, we are to do the same for others.

It is a shame when we love our own comfort more than others ("I won't go...")

The end is near, we must love enough that we:

Put our own comforts, securities, and desires on the shelf.

You weren't left here to love and care for yourself.

You were left here to love and care for others.

#3 A PROPER PROCESS

1 Peter 4:9

This ties in very closely with the previous point.

Love is the motivation, hospitality is the action.

But the point to what Peter says here is to be hospitable "without complaint"

**WE AREN'T JUST TALKING ABOUT ACTION,
WE ARE TALKING ABOUT ATTITUDE.**

There is a right way and a wrong way to do things.

**Peter doesn't just want you to go through the motions of love,
He wants you to really love people.**

1 Corinthians 13:1-3 "If I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, but do not have love, I have become a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal. If I have the gift of prophecy, and know all mysteries and all knowledge; and if I have all faith, so as to remove mountains, but do not have love, I am nothing. And if I give all my possessions to feed the poor, and if I surrender my body to be burned, but do not have love, it profits me nothing."

**When we properly see that this world is going down,
And we are motivated with love to save those in it,
Then we do it willingly, not while bearing a grudge with complaining.**

**I am always amazed at how quickly we as Christians
Can complain about the difficulties we think we face.**

Mark Cahill wrote in his book, "One Thing You Can't Do In Heaven"

"There are believers in China who literally walk six hours to go to church, and they don't have "McChurch" for thirty minutes! They thoroughly worship the Lord, and then they walk six hours back home. We consider it "suffering" when we have to drive to church in the rain!"

WE COMPLAIN ABOUT EVERYTHING IN MINISTRY DON'T WE?

Songs are too loud

Sermons are too long

Sitting is too uncomfortable

Standing is too tiring

Sinners are too disagreeable

Soul Winning is too intimidating

Suffering is simply unheard of

Our attitude shows that we are too self-centered.

#4 A PROPER PARTICIPATION

1 Peter 4:10

Peter starts this verse by reminding us of a very important truth.

"each one has received a special gift"

If you are a believer, then you have a spiritual gift

1 Corinthians 12:7 "But to each one is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good."

The Spirit literally manifests Himself in you "for the common good"

**You have been specially designed with a special gift
That God intends to use for His glory.**

No one has them all, but everyone has at least one.

1 Corinthians 12:11 "But one and the same Spirit works all these things, distributing to each one individually just as He wills."

Peter says that whatever gift God has given you,
"employ it in serving one another"

**It is amazing to me how many people in churches today
Are either content to not know their spiritual gift,
Or are content not to use it.**

When we do this, we are not being "good stewards of the manifold grace of God."

God purposely set up the church as a body.

1 Corinthians 12:18-26 "But now God has placed the members, each one of them, in the body, just as He desired. If they were all one member, where would the body be? But now there are many members, but one body. And the eye cannot say to the hand, "I have no need of you"; or again the head to the feet, "I have no need of you." On the contrary, it is much truer that the members of the body which seem to be weaker are necessary; and those members of the body which we deem less honorable, on these we bestow more abundant honor, and our less presentable members become much more presentable, whereas our more presentable members have no need of it. But God has so composed the body, giving more abundant honor to that member which lacked, so that there may be no division in the body, but that the members may have the same care for one another. And if one member suffers, all the members suffer with it; if one member is honored, all the members rejoice with it."

What a wonderful passage.

You say, "I'm not important to the body. The church can go on without me. They don't need me there."

WRONG!

So maybe you are a part of the body that is often deemed "less honorable".
It is still very important.

Think about in your body.

*What happens when your tooth aches,
Or you have an ingrown toenail, or your nose is stopped up?*

Those parts may seem less important, until they aren't working properly.
For even a big toe, if it won't do its job, can cripple the body.

So it is in church.

We need far more than people who can preach and people who can sing.

**If you are doing nothing but attending, then shame on you.
You are not being a good steward of the grace of God in you,
And you are letting the body down.**

We need you.

We need proper participation.
As you have "received a special gift, employ it in serving"

Proper perception, perspective, process, participation

#5 A PROPER PURPOSE

1 Peter 4:11

It is easy in life to get caught up in things that don't matter.

Many times we drop our guard, and get distracted with what is not important.

So that we are real clear about our purpose, Peter reminds us.

If God has equipped you to speak, then get busy, and do it with God's authority.

Don't just throw out options and scenarios. We have the word of God.
Speak with a heart, "*Thus sayeth the Lord!*"

The end is near, the world doesn't need suggestions, the world needs truth.

If God has equipped you to serve, then never stop, even when you are tired.
Serve "by the strength which God supplies"

And the purpose for this is simple.

"so that in ALL things God may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom belongs the glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen."

TO LEAD ALL MEN TO GLORIFY GOD

Romans 12:6-8 "Since we have gifts that differ according to the grace given to us, each of us is to exercise them accordingly: if prophecy, according to the proportion of his faith; if service, in his serving; or he who teaches, in his teaching; or he who exhorts, in his exhortation; he who gives, with liberality; he who leads, with diligence; he who shows mercy, with cheerfulness."

I want you to realize the unique opportunity that is ours.
"The end of all things is near"

DID YOU EVER RUN IN A RELAY RACE?

It is a group of people working together, and depending upon one another to achieve a common purpose.

Church, we are the anchor leg.
The end is near.

**This is no time for the church of Jesus Christ
To lose its Perception or its Perspective, or its Process,
or its Participation, or its Purpose.**

If there ever was a time for us to focus on our purpose, this is it.

"The end of all things is near!"

Church, I want to call you to active duty this morning.
Perception, Perspective, Process, Participation, Purpose

The end of all things is near, we cannot afford to drop the baton.

**If you are here this morning,
And you know you have never truly come
To the Lord Jesus Christ.**

You've never:
Confessed your sin, Denied yourself, Taken up the cross, and Followed Jesus.

Then I also seek to remind you, that the end of all things is near.

2 Corinthians 6:2 "for He says, "AT THE ACCEPTABLE TIME I LISTENED TO YOU, AND ON THE DAY OF SALVATION I HELPED YOU." Behold, now is "THE ACCEPTABLE TIME," behold, now is "THE DAY OF SALVATION"

**I want you to know that today,
If you will come and give your life to Jesus, He will save you,
He will give you the Holy Spirit,
He will use you to bring glory to Himself.**

**The end of all things is near,
Don't be caught unprepared.**