

## **HOPEFUL**

*First Peter: Standing firm in the hope and encouragement of the grace of God*

### **Lesson Title: End Time Living with One God**

#### Introduction

- A. Peter was a practical man, and he approaches this subject in a very practical way.
  1. Four commands and one goal. Simple and direct.
  2. How-to live-in light of the “***end of all things.***”
- B. We will handle this material in three parts.
  1. What does Peter mean by saying, “***the end of all things is at hand.***”
  2. What is the master key to Peter’s instruction. Verses 7 and 11 serve as bookends to this subject.
  3. Peter’s instruction in light of these things, which turns out to be four seemingly insignificant acts of love that aim at one significant end.

#### **“THE END OF ALL THINGS IS AT HAND.”**

- A. What does Jesus teach concerning the end times.
  1. He trained his disciples in a calm, deliberate manner.
  2. The closer he got to Calvary the more focused he became. Matthew 16:21-26
  3. Jesus’ teaching from Luke 21:
    - Demolition of Jerusalem Temple (6).
    - Wars and commotions (9).
    - Wars, earthquakes and famines and terrors and some kind of cataclysmic signs in the sky or space (10,11).

- Looking back on the wars and upheavals and famines, etc., he says, “But before all these things they will lay hands on you and will persecute you” (12).
- Then there is the end, and between these there is no set amount of time.
- Then Jesus adds some more signs that will happen on the way to the end (20,24).
- The destruction of Jerusalem is part of what is coming before the end. There are two occasions when Jerusalem will be surrounded. In between there is an unspecified length that is called the “**times of the Gentiles.**”

B. The disciples lived with the anticipation that Jesus would return in their lifetime. However...

1. Jerusalem would be destroyed, first.
2. World evangelism would take place, first.
3. Peter would have to get old, first (John 21:8).

C. An Interpretation:

1. Peter’s thoughts might have been like this:
2. We believe that the coming of Christ in the rapture is just around the corner.
3. All Scripture was written under the inspiration of the Holy Ghost – telling us not to be foolish and think that it will not happen.
4. God has set a plan in motion and in his time, when he wills, it will come to pass.
5. Peter wants them to know that the world is not operating according to the vacillations of human rulers but according to the eternal timetable of God.

## **THE MASTER KEY: GOD'S GLORY**

- A. The way Peter sets this section up, verse 7 and verse 11 function like bookends in the text.
1. In verse 7 Peter says, "This big, paradigm changing thing is about to happen, so live like it.
  2. Then in verse 11, he tells us what these specific things are supposed to be doing or what big target these little things are aiming at.
  3. The master key reads like this: ***"...in order that in everything God may be glorified through Jesus Christ. To Him belong glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen."***
- B. That is the absolute master key to this whole section.
1. There is nothing more significant, more massive than this goal.
  2. God is diligently directing every *instance of time* and *everything in heaven and earth* toward this goal.
  3. In everything God gets the glory. What that means!
  4. So, given the massive significance of this goal, here is my question: **What actions would you expect Peter to call for from us.**
    - Would you not expect something big on the other side of that?
    - The highest goal of all things everywhere is the *glory of God through Jesus Christ*, and since *"the end of all things is at hand,"* we ought to live...
    - **What God intends for 99.9% of us is small, humble, joyful acts of obedience to our duties over the long haul.**

## **FOUR URGENT COMMANDS IN LIGHT OF END TIMES!**

- A. **Be self-controlled and sober minded for the sake of your prayers.**

1. *Sober minded* is the Greek translation of our word *self-controlled* and means a *dead-earnest attitude*.
2. It is the very opposite from a *stupor of drunkenness* or *unthinking flippancy*.
3. Jesus links this same kind of sobriety for the sake of prayerfulness concerning the destruction of Jerusalem (Luke 21).
4. The secret of maintaining balance and calmness is prayer. Prayer sharpens our discernment.
5. Sobriety and a clear mind equip us for prayer.
6. So, how are we doing?

**B. Stay fervent in love for one another.**

1. "*Fervent*" means "*strained*."
2. If ever there was time to stretch our love for one another to the limit, it is during these end times.
3. What it is that love reveals – **FORGIVENESS!**
4. To love someone moves us to act for their good.
5. "***We are most like beasts when we kill. We are most like men when we judge. We are most like God when we forgive.***"
6. Patient, quick forgiving, earnest love covers a multitude of sins.

**C. Show hospitality to one another without grumbling.**

1. This does not refer only to the loveable and those who are fun to be with.
2. Hospitality is "stranger focused" in the Bible. Inviting outsiders in.
3. Our tables preach the gospel.

4. Our living rooms preach the gospel.
5. Peter calls for us to “**glory God**” as we show hospitality.

D. Use our God given gifts to serve one another.

1. The gifts we have should be used in serving one another.
2. When we speak it should not be our own opinions and philosophies, but “**the utterance from God.**”
3. The gifts of God are resources with which to express our love.
4. Do you see it? The glory of God, the love of God growing like bunches of grapes in the local church is not big, fast, and famous.
5. It is the Kingdom of God leavening the lump.
6. Peter’s point is to patient, longsuffering, and joyful obedience to the slow, small, and insignificant fruits of the Spirit for the sake of God’s glory and our joy.