

“Above All... Says It All”

1 Peter 4:7-8

November 12, 2023

INTRO:

What is most important to you?

When was the last time you took inventory of your priorities?

How do your priorities & choices match up with God’s Word?

Think about it...

What do you do with God’s firsts, always, and above all’s?

Seek first the kingdom of God...

See the “all” instructions in the Great C’s

Do all things to the glory of God... **1 Co. 10:31 & Col. 3:17**

Listen to the passionate prayer of Christ in [John 17:21ff](#)

*Today we will see the eternal and everyday value of Christlike
passion, purity, & love for one another!*

1 Peter 3:8

*Finally, **all of you, have unity of mind (harmony), sympathy,
brotherly love, a tender heart, and a humble mind.***

PRAYER

CONTEXT:

- ~ 1st Peter: “No Matter What!”
- ~ **Blessed & Beloved... Holy & Harmonized!**
- ~ Today’s about priorities & purity

BIG IDEA: We cannot over emphasize the importance of biblical koinonia!

PREVIEW:

- A. BE Ready!
- B. BE Careful!
- C. BE Koinonia

T/S: [2 Timothy 3:16-17](#)

All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, 17so that the servant of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.

TEXT:

I. BE READY

(v.7a)

The end of all things is near/at hand;

A. **"The end"** = completion; the finish line!

GENESIS 6:5-14

5Then the LORD saw that the wickedness of man was great on the earth, and that every intent of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually... **8**But Noah found favor in the eyes of the LORD...
13Then God said to Noah, "The end of all flesh has come before Me; for the earth is filled with violence because of them; and behold, I am about to destroy them with the earth. **10**"Make for yourself an ark...

a. We must understand the *"all-ready / not yet"*

b. **See the diagram of 2 ages / kingdoms...**

(see the following proof texts: 2 Ages: **Matthew 12:32**; Luke 20:34-35; Ephesian 1:21; and 2 kingdoms: Luke 22:15-16; Mark 10:17-29 = 2 Ages & 2 Kingdoms & entering the kingdom of God = eternal life! *** **1 Peter 1:20... plus... 1 John 2:18!** & Acts 2:16-17 & Matthew 12:28 & Luke 17:20-21 & Hebrews 6:4-5 = kingdom of God has come upon you! = the "already but not yet" (CRITICAL CONTEXT: **2 Peter 3:3-8...** with the LORD a thousand years is as a day & a day is as a thousand years...)

Matthew 12:28

...I... ...the kingdom of God has come upon you.

1 John 2:18

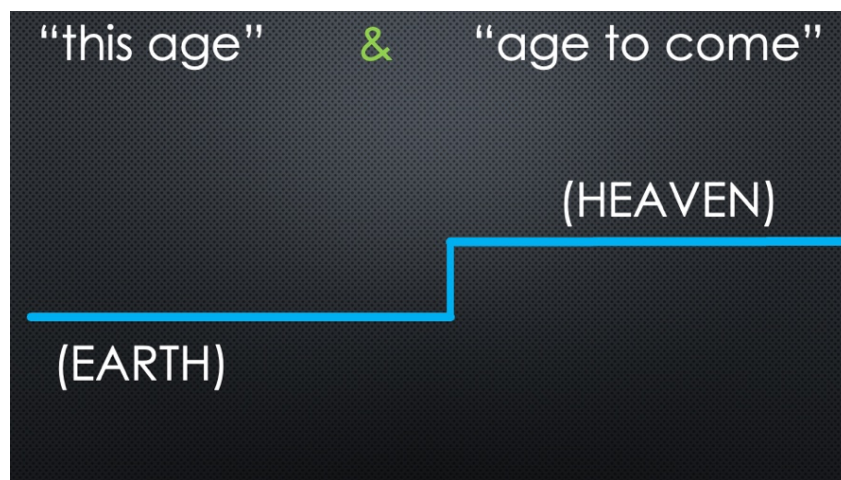
Children, it is the last hour, and as you have heard that antichrist is coming, so now many antichrists have come.

Therefore we know that it is the last hour.

2 Peter 3:3

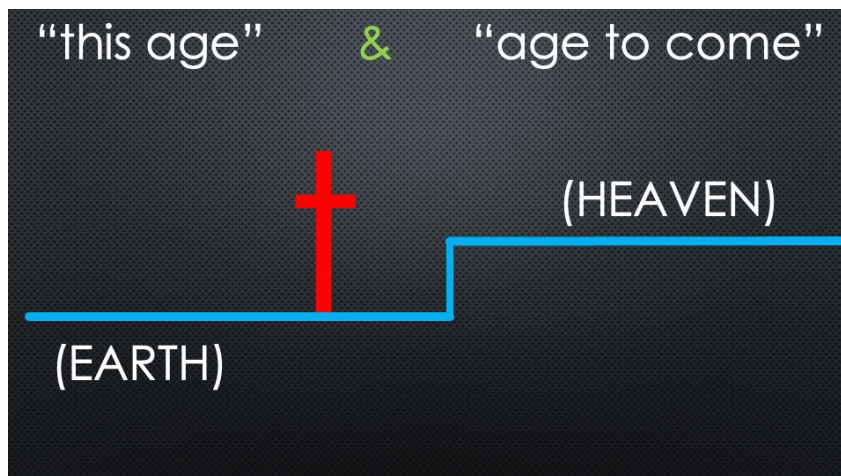
Above all, you must understand that in the last days scoffers will come, scoffing and following their own evil desires.

- i. Kingdom created
- ii. Kingdom came
- iii. Kingdom completion



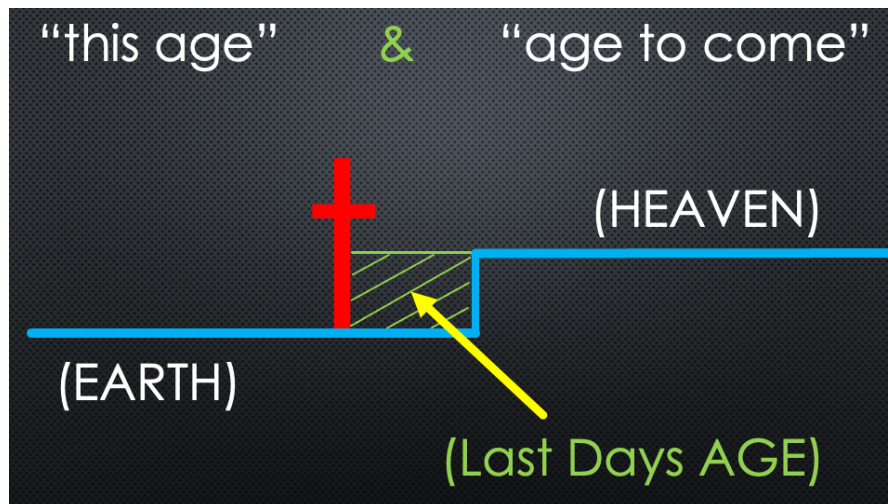
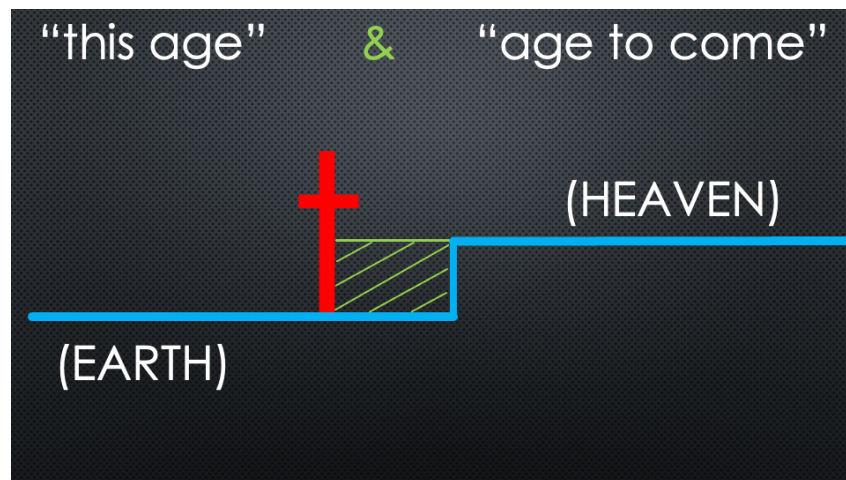
B. *"of all things"*

- a. Pertaining to the **Jews**
- b. Pertaining to **junk**
- c. Pertaining to **Jesus**

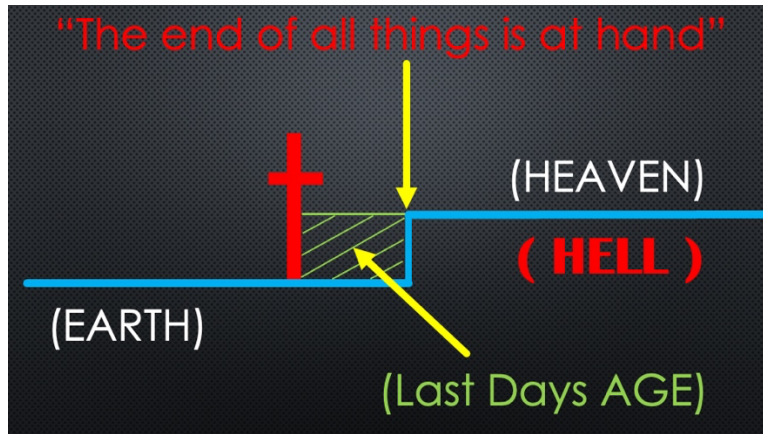


C. **“is at hand;”**

- a. *“BE ready!”*
 - i. *“THE end is at hand”*
 - ii. *“YOUR end is at hand”*
 - iii. *The response should be the same!*
- b. ***“Heads UP!”***
- c. Relatively speaking, we’re getting close!



T/S: ***“therefore”*** = insight & implication
connection & application



II. BE CAREFUL

(v.7b)

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

(BE careful internally, missionally, & eternally!)

- A. *“be self-controlled”*
- B. *“and”*
- C. *“be sober-minded”*

1 Peter 1:13

*Therefore, preparing your minds for action, and **being sober-minded**, set your hope fully on the grace that will be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ.*

1 Peter 5:8

Be sober-minded; be watchful. Your adversary the devil prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour.

D. “for the sake of your prayers”

- a. Dismantling or disregarding your prayer life is like a deep-sea diver ignoring their oxygen tank and breathing apparatus. - JDP
- b. Jesus taught us to pray: “...*Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven.*”
- c. *Bad thinkers are lousy prayer partners.* - JDP
- d. *Those lacking self-control & sober-thinking are NOT hearing from God, even when they say & think they are... that’s the effect of an out of control self & lack of spiritual sobriety.*
- JDP

III. BE KOINONIA (v.8)

gAbove all, keep loving one another earnestly, since love covers a multitude of sins.

- A. **“Above”** = higher; prioritized; valued
- B. **“all”** = highest; #1 priority!; #1 value

- C. **“keep”** = perpetual; nonstop; no excuse
- D. **“loving”**

1 Corinthians 13:1-8a, 13

The Way of Love

If I speak in the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I am a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal. 2And if I have prophetic powers, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have all faith, so as to remove mountains, but have not love, I am nothing. 3If I give away all I have, and if I deliver up my body to be burned, but have not love, I gain nothing. 4Love is patient and kind; love does not envy or boast; it is not arrogant 5or rude. It does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful 6it does not rejoice at wrongdoing, but rejoices with the truth. 7Love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. 8Love never fails/ends... 13So now faith, hope, and love abide, these three; but the greatest of these is love.

LOVE is...

<i>Timeless</i>	<i>vs.</i>	<i>Crammed</i>
<i>Tough</i>	<i>vs.</i>	<i>Copied</i>
<i>Tested</i>	<i>vs.</i>	<i>Compromised</i>
<i>True</i>	<i>vs.</i>	<i>Counterfeited</i>
<i>Truth</i>	<i>vs.</i>	<i>Corrupted</i>

- E. **“loving one another”** = active & relational!

VIDEO: “Koinonia Kingdom Culture”

If you don't do what He IS... you're not His. - JDP

Love is to Christians what swimming is to fish. - JDP

If we think that we did... then we missed what He's done. - JDP

To BE like Christ is to LOVE like Christ. - JDP

This is only too much if you want to reject God & His Word... - JDP

- a. *Aberrant love:* departing/deviating from right
- b. *Abundant love:* great quantity; over-sufficient
- c. *Brilliant love:* distinguished or magnificent
- d. **Covenant love:**
 - i. Marriage
 - ii. **Creator Christ**
 - iii. **Christian/Church: "A solemn agreement, promise, commitment between the members of a Christian church to act together in harmony with the precepts of the gospel." Dictionary.com**
- e. *Jubilant love* = "get to!"
- f. *Fervent love* = "No matter what!" (Great C's)
- g. *Observant love* = "Obedient" (John 14:15)
- h. *Radiant love* = "Light of the world witnessing"
- i. *Resilient love* = Hebrews 12:3
- j. *Servant love* = Matthew 20:28
- k. *Turbulent love* = Beatitudes; Ephesians 6:10ff
- l. *Vibrant love* = John 17:21ff
- m. *Valiant love* = John 15:13 (lay down one's life)

“The soldier... above all others... prays for peace, for it is the soldier who must suffer and bear the deepest wounds and scars of war. - General Douglas MacArthur

Dr. Wayne Grudem:

*Where love abounds in a fellowship of Christians, many small offences, and even some large ones, are readily overlooked and forgotten. **But where love is lacking,** every word is viewed with suspicion, every action is liable to misunderstanding, and conflicts abound — **to Satan’s perverse delight** (cf. Heb. 12:15; by contrast, 1 Cor. 13:4–7).*

F. ***“earnestly/fervently”***

a. Zealously... (Up, In, & Out)

i. Worship

ii. Walk/Work

iii. Warfare/Witness

b. Opposite of superficial & lukewarm

c. Root word = ***“stretched”*** & ***“wholly out”***

d. 1 John 3:18 is a great example...

e. BE... ALL-out or ALL-in passionate love!

f. See ***“homothoomadon,”*** riotous passion

g. **Deeper extended word study:**

i. Philippians 3:13 ***“stretching forward”***

ii. Acts 12:5 ***“earnest prayer”*** for Peter

iii. **Luke 22:44** Christ’s ***“earnest prayer”***
and “sweat like great drops of blood”

VIDEO: ***“Acts 2:46 Koinonia”***

*The evidence of the resurrection of Christ is we...
the body of Christ! - JDP*

The true family of God loves UP, IN, and OUT! - JDP

G. *“since” = because; cause; reason; justified...*

H. *“love covers”*

Proverbs 10:12

***Hatred stirs up strife/conflict, but love covers all
offenses/sins/transgressions.***

Love = agape... = Christlike core of all relationships

“Covers” = address like Christ...
NOT ignoring or hiding or running)

Psalm 32:1

***Blessed is the one whose transgression is forgiven,
whose sin is covered.***

Proverbs 19:11

***Good sense makes one slow to anger,
and it is his glory to overlook an offense.***

Colossians 3:12-13

*Put on then, as God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, compassionate hearts, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience, **13**bearing with one another and, if one has a complaint against another, forgiving each other; as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive.*

Ephesians 4:1-6

*I therefore, a prisoner for the Lord, urge you to walk in a manner worthy of the calling to which you have been called, **2**with all humility and gentleness, with patience, bearing with one another in love, **3**eager to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. **4**There is one body and one Spirit—just as you were called to the one hope that belongs to your call— **5**one Lord, one faith, one baptism, **6**one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all.*

James 5:19-20

My brothers, if anyone among you wanders from the truth and someone brings him back, **20**let him know that whoever brings back a sinner from his wandering will save his soul from death and will cover a multitude of sins.

a. Galatians 6:1-2

Brothers, if anyone is caught in any transgression, you who are spiritual should restore him in a spirit of gentleness.

Keep watch on yourself, lest you too be tempted. Bear one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ.

- I. *“a multitude” = many; beyond counted*
- J. *“multitude of sins.” = our Romans 5:8*

God's love is > sin's pain the way truth is > lies!
- JDP

A multitude of other's sins... offer us great opportunities to practice loving them **(confrontationally)** the same way God loves us.
- JDP

Jesus loves us **AND** turns the lights on in our lives!
- JDP

VIDEO: *“Koinonia & Church”*

*When professing Christians don't live this love...
They are either lying about their spiritual identity... OR
they are calling God a liar & breaking the law of Christ!*
(see Galatians 6:2)

REVIEW:

We cannot over emphasize the importance of biblical koinonia!

VIDEO:

“Uganda Karamoja Irrigation 11/23”

Per the Ugandan National Ministry of Disaster Preparedness:

- 24 Ugandans die each day due to hunger related issues
- 1,000 have died in Karamoja alone in 2022-23
- **80% of Karamoja = “critically/food insecure”**
- **1.5 Karamajong die per day from hunger issues**
- With our irrigation system, local **deaths now = 0**
- National gov. is giving HISbridge Uganda a water tower

19 families are no longer on the “food-insecure” or “critically food-insecure” danger list!
(142 people are now safe from hunger dangers.)

CLOSE:

2 Corinthians 13:11

Finally, brethren, rejoice, be made complete, be comforted, be like-minded, live in peace; and the God of love and peace will be with you.

Life Application Study Notes:

Paul's closing words... what he wanted the Corinthians to remember about the needs facing their church – are still fitting for the church today. When these qualities are not present, **there are problems that must be dealt with.**

These traits do not come to a church by glossing over problems, conflicts, and difficulties.

They are not produced by neglect, denial, withdrawal, or bitterness. They are the by-products of the extremely hard work of solving problems. Just as Paul and the Corinthians had to hammer out difficulties to bring peace, so...

we must APPLY the principles of God's Word, and not just hear them.

PRAYER

WORSHIP: *Hold Us Together; BE In The Room; Turn This Thing Around*



One FAITH. One FAMILY. One FOCUS.

“But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you, and you will BE My witnesses (locally, regionally, and globally).” – Acts 1:8

One Question: *WHAT DO YOU WANT?*

One Offer: *COME AND SEE.*

One Promise: *TRUTH IN LOVE!*

Our Truth-in-Love Distinctives: We are...

1. Responding to grace & repenting of sin...
2. Trusting the Bible & obeying God's Word...
3. Growing in-Christ & living Spirit-led...
4. Praying for guidance & following by faith...
5. Dying to self & carrying our cross...
6. BE-ing the Church & loving one another...(*truly loving* one another)
7. Equipping the saints & exemplifying supernatural unity...
8. Ministering as ambassadors & discerning matters shrewdly...
9. Worshipping God vertically & experiencing Him horizontally...
10. Proclaiming the Gospel (*no matter what*) & fishing for men...
11. Making disciples-warriors & winning spiritual-warfare...
12. Loving our King & serving His kingdom!

PRAYER

WORSHIP: *Hold Us Together; BE In The Room;*

STUDY NOTES:

New American Commentary: Schreiner

Living in Light of the End (4:7–11)

⁷ The end of all things is near. Therefore be clear minded and self-controlled so that you can pray. ⁸ Above all, love each other deeply, because love covers over a multitude of sins. ⁹ Offer hospitality to one another without grumbling. ¹⁰ Each one should use whatever gift he has received to serve others, faithfully administering God's grace in its various forms. ¹¹ If anyone speaks, he should do it as one speaking the very words of God. If anyone serves, he should do it with the strength God provides, so that in all things God may be praised through Jesus Christ. To him be the glory and the power for ever and ever. Amen.

Verses 5–6 conclude with a reference to the final judgment, and Peter reprised that theme in v. 7a with a reminder that the end is near.

Hence, **he returned to the main theme of the previous paragraph.**

Since the end is near, believers should live according to God's will.

What this means in practice is that believers should be alert and sober for prayer, that they should live in sacrificial love that includes hospitality, and that they should use their gifts, whether speaking or serving, to help others.

*Their aim and motivation in all they do is to see
God glorified through Jesus Christ.*

4:7 The previous paragraph ended with a reference to the final judgment (v. 5), death, and the resurrection (v. 6). Hence, it is not surprising that v. 7 opens with a reference to the end of history. The words “all things” (*pantōn*) could be translated “all people,” but in this context “all things” makes better sense, being placed at the beginning of the sentence for emphasis.

- The reason the end is near is that the ministry, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ have inaugurated the last days (cf. 1 Cor 10:11; 1 John 2:18).
- In the New Testament the theme that the end of history is imminent is often sounded (Rom 13:11–12; Phil 4:5; Heb 10:23–25; Jas 5:7–8; Rev 1:3; 22:10).

*All the following exhortations in this paragraph
draw an inference from the coming of the end.*

See the “therefore” (*oun*) in the middle of v. 7. **Because the end is near, believers should live in the following way.**

We have a typical feature of New Testament eschatology here. Nowhere does the New Testament encourage the setting of dates or of any other kinds of charts. Eschatology is invariably used to encourage believers to live in a godly way (cf. Matt 24:36–25:46; Rom 13:11–14; 1 Cor 15:58; Phil 4:4–9; 1 Thess 5:1–11; 2 Pet 3:11–16). Nor does the New Testament ever invite believers to withdraw from the world because the end is near and to gaze at the skies, hoping that the Lord will return soon.

The imminence of the end should function as a stimulus to action in this world. The knowledge that believers are sojourners and exiles, whose time is short, should galvanize them to make their lives count now.

We might expect a call for extraordinary behavior, thinking something unusual would be demanded in light of the arrival of the end. Peter exhorted his readers, however, to pursue virtues that are a normal part of New Testament paraenesis. **We are reminded of what Martin Luther said when asked what he would do if the end would come today. He replied that he would plant a tree and pay his taxes. What Luther meant, of course, was that he lived every day in light of the end, and hence he would do the appointed task of that day.**

What is striking in the paragraph is how Peter shifted from a focus on relationship with outsiders to how believers should relate to one another.

Peter summoned his readers to “be clear minded and self-controlled.”

The two verbs “be clear minded” (sōphronēsate) and “be self-controlled” (nēpsate) are virtually synonymous and should be understood together.

Indeed, **the word “pray” (lit., “prayers,” *proseuchas*) is attached to both verbs.** The nearness of the end has led some believers to lose their heads and act irrationally. On the contrary, believers should think sensibly as they contemplate the brevity of life in this world. Those who know the contours of history are able to assess the significance of the present. **Their sensible and alert thinking is to be used for prayer, for entreating God to act and move in the time that still remains.**

The realization that God is bringing history to a close should provoke believers to depend on him, and this dependence is manifested in prayer, for in prayer believers recognize that any good that occurs in the world is due to God’s grace.

4:8

The imminence of the end should also provoke believers to love.

In the Greek the participle “having” (*echontes*), which is not translated at all in the NIV, is rendered by “keep” (NASB, HCSB), “maintain” (NRSV), and “hold” (RSV) in other translations. Many scholars understand the participle as an imperative, and this is reflected in the various translations, even in the idiomatic translation of the NIV. Achtemeier understands the participle as dependent upon the imperatives in v. 7, but even in this instance the construction functionally ends up being an imperative.

Peter did not merely exhort believers to love one another in light of the *eschaton*. He said that such love is “above all,” and he exhorted his readers to “constant love” (NRSV, *agapēn ektenē*).

The importance of such constancy in love has already been underlined in [1 Pet 1:22](#), and the theme is broached again because love is central in the Christian life.

Indeed, Jesus himself warned that love is apt to grow cold at the end of the age (Matt 24:12).

Hence, the need is to continue to stoke the fires of love, so that it is displayed to others. The centrality of love is evident from 1 Cor 13:1–7, from the teaching of Jesus (Matt 22:34–40), and from Johannine teaching (e.g., John 13:34–35; 1 John 2:7–11). When believers contemplate how to spend their lives in light of the Lord’s coming, in their few days as sojourners, they should remind themselves of the priority of love.

In the second half of the verse the reason love should be pursued is explicated, as the word “because” (*hoti*) indicates. The reason given is that love “covers over a multitude of sins.”

The proverbial saying here also is found in [Jas 5:20](#), though the future rather than the present tense is used in James.

Two interpretations have been prominent.

Did Peter mean that love covers over or atones for one’s own sins? It could be argued that such teaching is also present in Luke 7:47 and Matt 6:14–15.

This interpretation should be rejected.

It flies in the face of the rest of the New Testament and even 1 Peter (1:18–19; 2:24–25; 3:18) to see the love of believers as somehow atoning for their own sins. Nor do Luke 7:47 and Matt 6:14–15, rightly interpreted, teach that the love or forgiveness of believers somehow atones for their sins.

The second interpretation is preferable.

When believers lavish love on others, the sins and offenses of others are overlooked.

Four arguments support this interpretation.

1. First, it fits with the emphasis on mutuality in the immediate context. Love is directed to others, not oneself (v. 8). Genuine love is displayed to others through hospitality (v. 9), and gifts are employed to serve others, not oneself (v. 10).
2. Second, the interpretation proposed here fits with Prov 10:12, which is alluded to here: “Hatred stirs up dissension, but love covers over all wrongs.” The clear meaning is that love covers over the wrongs of others, while those who are full of hatred use the sins of others as a springboard to attack them.
3. Third, though Jas 5:20 is also disputed, it is quite likely that the one who restores the sinner from his errant way covers over the sins of the one who went astray.
4. Fourth, the notion that love overlooks the sins of others is clearly taught elsewhere in the New Testament (Matt 18:21–22; 1 Cor 13:4–7).

1st Peter Commentary: Grudem

Pray more and love each other more (4:7–9)

7. *The end of all things is at hand* means that all the major events in God's plan of redemption have occurred, and now all things are ready for Christ to return and rule.

Rather than thinking of world history in terms of earthly kings and kingdoms, Peter thinks in terms of 'redemptive history'. From that perspective all the previous acts in the drama of redemption have been completed—creation, fall, the calling of Abraham, the exodus from Egypt, the kingdom of Israel, the exile in Babylon and the return, the birth of Christ, his life, death and resurrection, his ascension into heaven, and the pouring out of the Holy Spirit to establish the church. The great 'last act', the church age, had been continuing for about thirty years by the time Peter wrote. Thus, the curtain could fall at any time, ushering in the return of Christ and the end of the age. All things are ready: *the end of all things* (the 'goal' to which 'all' these events have been leading) *is at hand*.

Christians who realize that the end of the age could happen at any time should act in a certain way: *therefore keep sane and sober for your prayers*. The word translated *sane* means 'having a sound mind, thinking about and evaluating situations maturely and correctly' (the same word and its related terms are used in Luke 8:35; Rom. 12:3; 2 Tim. 1:7; Titus 1:8). For *sober*, see comments at 1:13. Such attitudes of mind are in many ways opposite to the sins mentioned in verses 3 to 5.

The reason given for being sane and sober is for your prayers; the plural suggests specific, individual prayers throughout each day. The idea is not simply 'so that you can pray' (NIV), but 'in order to pray more effectively, more appropriately',

Christians should be alert to events and evaluate them correctly in order to be able to pray more intelligently.

Peter's words also imply that prayer based on knowledge and mature evaluation of a situation is more effective prayer (otherwise there would be no relationship between being 'sane and sober' and one's prayers).

What this verse teaches could well be put into practice when reading the newspaper, listening to the news, travelling to work, and so on.

8. *Above all hold unfailing your love for one another* (cf. notes on the related verb for *love* [*agapaō*] at 1:22). *Unfailing* inadequately translates *ektenēs*, which here has the adverbial sense of 'earnestly'. A better translation is therefore 'keep loving one another earnestly' (see note on the cognate word *ektenōs* at 1:22). The reason for doing so is *since* (or 'because') *love covers a multitude of sins*.

Where love abounds in a fellowship of Christians, many small offences, and even some large ones, are readily overlooked and forgotten.

But where love is lacking, every word is viewed with suspicion, every action is liable to misunderstanding, and conflicts abound—to Satan's perverse delight (cf. Heb. 12:15; by contrast, 1 Cor. 13:4–7).

A similar idea is expressed in **Proverbs 10:12**: *'Hatred stirs up strife, but love covers all offences.'*

R.C. Sproul

THE END OF ALL THINGS

1 Peter 4:7

We have been looking at one text after another that have had a significant place in the history of Christian theology. All these texts have been the focal point of great controversy. We find another one here. We are going to study verse 7 in the light of some significant historical developments in the theology of the last two hundred years.

There are three distinct possibilities as to what Peter means when he announces that the end of all things is at hand. The first possibility, which seems to be the obvious one, is that the end of the world is near, bringing with it the end of all things on earth. **The second possible interpretation is that Peter is referring to the end of all things Jewish,** looking toward the catastrophic event that took place in A.D. 70, when the temple was destroyed and Jerusalem was trodden underfoot by the Gentiles. **From the Jewish perspective, the end of Jerusalem, and thus the end of temple worship, would be the end of everything.** **The third possibility is that Peter has in mind the nearness of the demise of those reading the epistle. Any one of those views is a possible interpretation.**

Advent of Liberalism

Nineteenth-century church history witnessed the advent of Liberalism. There have always been those with a liberal view toward various issues in the life of the church, but in the nineteenth century, a particular movement came to be known as Liberalism. It was dominant in Europe, particularly in Germany, and it eventually found its way to England and across the sea to the United States. It has had a dramatic impact on colleges and seminaries and particularly on the creeds of the mainline churches. **The earlier teachers of Liberalism believed that the Bible had**

to be naturalized in order to be relevant to modern people after the Enlightenment and the scientific advancements that came out of it.

To say it another way,

the gospel message had to be desupernaturalized if it was to have any relevance to modern people.

A neo-liberal of the twentieth century, Rudolf Bultmann, made the observation that modern man cannot avail himself of antibiotic medicine or use the marvels of electricity yet still believe in a three-storied universe (earth here, hell below, and heaven above), in a world inhabited by demons or angels, or in a gospel with teachings such as the miracles surrounding the life and death of Jesus. For the gospel to be relevant today, said Bultmann, it must be demythologized. He said that we must cut through the husk of mythology to find a core of truth that will be useful today.

The Liberals systematically denied all the miracles and supernatural elements of the New Testament. They redefined the kingdom of God and the mission of Jesus and, consequently, the mission of the church. For these thinkers, the kingdom of God was not something that happens in heaven but something that takes place here through progressive education and ethical behavior. **Jesus was exalted by this group as the great moral teacher who gave us the pattern for right living. They saw the gospel as social with respect to the necessity of being humanitarian and ministering to the pain and suffering of the world.**

Of course, this produced a crisis in the church.

Into this milieu of nineteenth-century Liberalism came a brilliant New Testament scholar, Albert Schweitzer. He was a physician, and he also had an international reputation as a world-class organist. He became one of the most famous twentieth-century missionaries in Africa. Schweitzer analyzed the teaching of nineteenth-century Liberalism and found it wanting.

At a very key point in his classic work, *The Quest for the Historical Jesus*, Schweitzer chided the nineteenth-century Liberals for failing to understand the message of Jesus, a message,

Schweitzer said, that is from start to finish eschatological.

The word *eschatological* comes from the word *eschatology*, which comes from a word in Greek that refers to the last things. **The science of eschatology is the study of the future, which includes the study of the return of Jesus, the restoration of the cosmos, the coming of new heavens and a new earth, matters of heaven and hell, and the last judgment.** However, when Schweitzer used the term *eschatological*, he meant more than just future events.

Schweitzer posited that to understand Jesus, we must realize that Jesus thought that the kingdom of God would be brought to pass in history by the supernatural, transcendent intervention of Almighty God.

It would not evolve through a natural process or as the result of increased education; it would come about through something that God Himself would do. Schweitzer devastated the nineteenth-century Liberals with that finding. He said that their attempt to liberalize Christianity was dishonest, because it was reductionistic and failed to take the teaching of Jesus seriously.

Schweitzer said that when Jesus sent out the seventy disciples and empowered them to preach and to announce the coming of the kingdom, Jesus expected the kingdom to come then, but it did not happen. Therefore, Schweitzer said, Jesus had a growing realization that drastic steps would have to be taken in order to move the Father to bring this kingdom to pass. Schweitzer said that Jesus allowed Himself to be arrested, tried, and taken to the cross from which He awaited the climactic moment of the end of history, when the Father would intervene and save Him and deliver the kingdom. When that did not happen, Jesus' disappointment in His eschatological dream was manifested in the despair that pierced His soul when He cried, "My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?" (Matt. 27:46; Mark 15:34). The substance of the teaching of Albert Schweitzer was that Jesus was a remarkable man, a great teacher, and a visionary who died in disillusionment because the kingdom did not come.

I grew up in a church that followed the teachings of nineteenth-century Liberalism. The questions of the Westminster Shorter Catechism were altered to suit our minister, who made up his own questions, one of which was, "Who is the greatest living Christian?" The answer we were taught to reply was "Albert Schweitzer"—**Albert Schweitzer, whose book is a monument to unbelief in the deity of**

Christ. Schweitzer did, however, expose the folly of his predecessors who had tried to understand Jesus purely in ethical terms, not in terms of the central importance of the kingdom of God.

Schweitzer and others wrestled with a problem they called “*parousia* delay,” the delay of the return of Jesus. Every page of the New Testament seems to breathe an expectation of the nearness of the return of Jesus, and, they said, it is generally thought that the believers of the first century expected Jesus to return in their lifetime. In the Olivet Discourse, Jesus talked about the destruction of Jerusalem and His own appearing. When His disciples asked when those things would happen, He responded, “Assuredly, I say to you, this generation will by no means pass away till all these things take place” (Matt. 24:34).

Twentieth-century scholars said that Jesus expected His return to occur within a forty-year period, and, because of that, His disciples also expected it within that time frame. They were disappointed when it did not happen, so, in the latter writings of the New Testament the scholars look for an adjustment in the theology of the future, where provisions are made for postponement of the consummation of the kingdom.

Bertrand Russell wrote in his book *Why I Am Not a Christian* that Jesus taught that He would return within the space of forty years but failed to keep His word. Therefore, Russell did not think Jesus was worthy of his belief. **When I was in seminary, I was taught that the Bible is not to be trusted and that Jesus Himself was wrong in His future predictions.**

I wrote a book as a response to those claims called *Jesus’ View of the Last Day*, which focuses attention chiefly on the Olivet Discourse, because I believe that everything Jesus predicted would take place within forty years did take place within forty years.

Already and Not Yet

The next major milestone took place when a British New Testament scholar by the name of C. H. Dodd wrote an analysis of the parables of Jesus as well as of the Gospel of John and introduced to the church a theory called **“realized eschatology.”**

Dodd’s thesis was that Jesus’ future kingdom actually did come to pass in the first century. Concerning Jesus’ words, **“Assuredly, I say to you, there are some**

standing here who shall not taste death till they see the Son of Man coming in His kingdom” (Matt. 16:28; cf. Mark 9:1; Luke 9:27), Dodd said that this references the ascension of Christ and things related to it, such as Pentecost and the outpouring of the power of the Holy Spirit. In the ascension, Dodd said, Jesus was elevated to His position as the King of kings.

He ascended to His coronation, and all that He taught during His earthly ministry about His kingdom was fulfilled in those few years from the announcement to its realization. Dodd became famous for taking the opposite position from Schweitzer and the skeptics, saying not only was the kingdom of God not postponed but that it had actually come to pass in its fullness at that time.

However, other scholars said that if we carefully examine the concept of the kingdom of God in the New Testament, **we must take seriously the manifold passages that teach that the kingdom will not take place in the distant future, as the dispensationalists believe, but that the kingdom was inaugurated during the ministry of Jesus, the ascension, the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, and the destruction of Jerusalem.** Yet, these scholars say, elements of a future eschatology have not yet taken place, such as the resurrection of the dead from their graves that will occur at the time of the return of Jesus in glory, and therefore the church is to adopt a posture of diligent and vigilant expectation.

This idea was championed by the **Swiss scholar Oscar Cullmann, who gave us the D-day analogy we looked at in an earlier study. He said all that pertained to the consummation of the kingdom of God was accomplished during the ministry of Jesus. It was like D-day, he said, in that, for all intents and purposes, the war was over, but there were still things that had to take place before hostilities would cease.** However, D-day occurred in June 1944, but the Germans did not

surrender until the spring of 1945. **There was no two-thousand-year lapse between D-day and the end of the war, which rather strains Cullmann's analogy.**

Cullmann's analogy was further argued by a Dutch New Testament scholar, Hermann Ridderbos, who wrote a book entitled *The Coming of the Kingdom*. In the book Ridderbos dissects the different theories of the Liberals and concludes that in order to understand the biblical concept of the kingdom, we must grasp the "already and not yet," by which he meant that a large dimension of the kingdom has already come to pass—we are right now living in the eschatological era of the kingdom of God—but we still await the final consummation of all things.

Peter writes, **But the end of all things is at hand; therefore be serious and watchful in your prayers** (v. 7). The Greek word translated "all things" is *panta*.

The Greek word he uses for "the end" is *telos*, which is often translated as "goal," "purpose," or "aim." So, we could translate these words as "the goal of all things is at hand."

The Latin uses a form of the word *omnia* for "all things." Someone with all knowledge is "omniscient," and someone with all power is "omnipotent." The concept of all things is rooted here in the text, and when Peter refers to the end or the goal of all things, he uses a form of the word translated "near." It is nearby.

If Peter had in mind the end of the world, the final consummation of the kingdom, there is a problem with

that. The biblical view of the consummation of the kingdom of God and the completion of the work of Jesus is not the end of the world. The future of this planet, according to the New Testament, is not annihilation but restoration and renovation. We look for new heavens and a new earth. We could say that since there will be new heavens and a new earth, then the end of all these present things is going to take place, but it is not in God's plan to destroy the planet. As Paul tells us, "We know that the whole creation groans and labors with birth pangs together until now. Not only they, but we also who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, eagerly waiting for the adoption, the redemption of our body" (Rom. 8:22–23).

God's work of redemption is cosmic in scope. He is not just going to save us out of the world; He will redeem the world and everything in it.

Peter could have been thinking of the consummation of the kingdom at the return of Jesus. In his second epistle he inquires as to why the Lord delays in returning, and he answers, *"The Lord is not slack concerning His promise, as some count slackness, but is longsuffering toward us, not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance"* (2 Pet. 3:9).

The reason the culmination of the kingdom has not happened yet is that all of the elect have not been gathered in. Indeed, if the kingdom of God had been finished at the end of the first century, you and I would have missed it.

Peter might have been referencing the radical nearness of a crisis event that few in Christendom have taken seriously, probably the most significant extrabiblical event to take place in world history—the destruction of Jerusalem and the temple.

Up until A.D. 70 the Christian church was considered a subdivision or sect of Judaism. It was not recognized on its own terms until after the temple was destroyed and the Holy City was given into the hands of the Gentiles. In Luke's version of the prophecy of that event, the destruction and occupation would not be forever but only until the fullness of the Gentiles came in. That is,

there is an interim in world history between the age of the Jews and the age of the Gentiles; and after the age of the Gentiles is fulfilled, as Paul teaches in Romans 11, God will deal again with ethnic Israel. Whenever we hear Jesus speaking about the end of the age, we tend to fill in the blanks and think that the end of the age means the end of time, when in all probability he was speaking of the end of the age of the Jews, which would take place in a very short time.

Ready and Waiting

The third option is simply the impending demise of all people.

In light of the reality that our days are numbered, we are called in the New Testament to redeem the time, to make every day count, and that every day

would be one in which we prepare ourselves by being sober, serious, and watchful in our prayers.

So, whether Peter had in mind the coming destruction of Jerusalem, the coming end of our lives, or the ultimate consummation of the kingdom of Christ, it is still appropriate to heed his advice to be serious and watchful in our prayers, because in this age, and through all the centuries of the church, the church is called to be ever watchful, always waiting for the final return of Jesus.

We are warned that, for us, Jesus should not come as a thief in the night and find us in a state of business as usual, neglecting our prayers and our devotion to His kingdom. We are to be ever vigilant, ever watchful, ever ready for the Lord, for we know not when the Lord comes. “Even so, come, Lord Jesus!” (Rev. 22:20).

COVER OF LOVE

1 Peter 4:8–11

In our last study we looked at verse 7, where Peter introduced a sense of urgency, declaring, “The end of all things is at hand.” We wrestled with the possible different meanings and with application of the verse. Because of the nearness of the consummation of all things, **Peter calls us to be serious and watchful in our prayers.**

Whether the meaning of “the end of all things” is the end of our life, the end of the Jewish age, or the end of all redemptive history, we are to be vigilant in prayer. **In this study we find a continuation of that same vigilance.**

Fervent Love

And above all things have fervent love for one another, for “love will cover a multitude of sins”

(v. 8). The Torah contains 613 specific laws. People would like to know the priority of those laws, from the most important to the least. We have a tendency to want to organize our duties and responsibilities in such a manner. **In the New Testament from time to time we see priorities set forth. Jesus said, “Seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you” (Matt. 6:33).**

Our first priority is the seeking of the kingdom of God & His righteousness. We are to do that “first,” *prōtos*—not first in a chronological sense but first in the order of importance.

James in his epistle gives a similar admonition: *“But above all, my brethren, do not swear, either by heaven or by earth or with any other oath. But let your ‘Yes’ be ‘Yes,’ and your ‘No,’ ‘No,’ lest you fall into judgment”* (James 5:12).

James filled his letter with all kinds of ethical injunctions, but near the end of it he said that above all, a Christian should be known as someone whose word can be counted upon.

Peter uses this same method of accentuating something of supreme importance when he says, “Above all things have fervent love for one another.” Gone are the days when Hollywood would exploit religious themes without trashing Christianity, as they do today. In several of those older films, the Apostle Peter was depicted. I remember one in which Christians would gather at night and say, “The fisherman is here,” when the character of Peter walked before the people. As I watched the movie, I could sense the excitement and joy, and a holy hush fell over the people because they were about to hear from someone who had been with Jesus throughout His entire earthly ministry—Peter, who had been known for his impetuosity.

Peter had denied Jesus three times and then wept bitterly, but afterward Jesus talked to him on the seashore and asked him three times, “Simon, son of Jonah, do you love Me?” “Yes, Lord, You know that I love You.” Then “Feed my sheep” (John 21:15–17). *When I read this epistle from the pen of Peter, I can hear Jesus saying to him, “Peter, when you write to the people, remember that they are My sheep, and I want you to feed them.”* Peter fed the sheep with the teachings of Jesus, and he remembered what a high priority the Lord had put upon the love of the brethren. *“By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another”* (John 13:35).

Christian love is not just about an individual’s love for God or for Christ. He who loves God cannot

love God and hate his brother. We manifest our love for God by a fervent love for each other. There is a big difference between tolerance and zealous love.

Covering Love

Peter does not simply repeat Jesus' admonition, but he gives the reason for it, quoting from [Proverbs \(10:12\)](#). Peter writes that **we are to have fervent love for one another, for "love will cover a multitude of sins" (v. 8)**.

The metaphor of covering is of central importance to our understanding of salvation. The image of covering is found in the Old Testament. On the Day of Atonement, blood from a sacrificed animal was taken by the High Priest into the Holy of Holies and sprinkled on the mercy seat, which was the covering of the ark of the covenant, the most holy vessel in the *sanctus sanctorum*. The

blood of the sacrifice was poured over the throne of God to cover the sins of the people.

The practice began even earlier than on the Day of Atonement, way back at the fall. After Adam and Eve sinned, they felt ashamed. They became aware of their nakedness, and in their shame they tried to hide; they desired covering.

When God came into the garden and found His trembling creatures covering in shame, weighed down by the burden of their guilt, He made clothing from animal skins and covered their shame. This was the first act of redeeming grace, and throughout the rest of Scripture,

the idea of redemption is understood in terms of God's covering His naked, guilty people.

Supremely, we see this metaphor in the doctrine of justification. Our own righteousness is nothing but filthy rags and lacks the capacity to cover our sin, but we have been clothed with the righteousness of Jesus.

God takes the righteousness of His Son and uses it as a cloak to cover His sinful creatures. The only way we can stand before God is if we wear the covering of the righteousness of Jesus.

Here in Peter's epistle, **there is talk of another covering**—not the covering that God provides to His naked creatures, or the covering of our sin in the Holy of Holies, or even the cloak of Jesus' righteousness, but of **a special love that covers a multitude of sins. It is our love for each other.**

Several years ago I was asked by some students why my ministry was almost exclusively one of education and teaching rather than pastoring and preaching. I told them the reason is that I am too thin-skinned. Pastors receive significant criticism, which can cause them much hurt. With teaching, however, I critique the students; they do not critique me. The fear of public speaking is the primary phobia among American people because their entire person is on display and open to critique, much of which at times can be petty and negative. Preachers open themselves to scrutiny and criticism; it is unavoidable. I have been able to deal with that over the years; it is the pettiness that is difficult to handle.

Nothing will destroy a church faster than pettiness, people picking at each other over trivial things. In the New Testament we are told that when Christians commit gross and heinous sins, they must be disciplined as part of the spiritual nurture of the church. However, our Lord was very careful to specify the sins that require discipline, understanding that no one in the church of Christ is finished with sanctification. We all bring different baggage into the Christian life; we are each at a different point in our progression. We can destroy one another

by nitpicking. If one of your brothers or sisters has an annoying habit, it may irritate you, but it has been covered by Jesus. We all have to endure people who criticize us over insignificant, petty things. Let the world be petty, but let it not be said of Christians. Let us love one another with such a fervency that we have the love that covers a multitude of sins.

Covering love is how families survive. Family members know each other's foibles, weaknesses, and failures, and the bond of a family will not last long if there is constant, petty complaining in the home. The church is a family too.

Back in the sixties I met some people who were involved in the charismatic movement. They expressed excitement about the fellowship within the movement. They had made a pledge to be scrupulously honest and open with one another and never to have an unexpressed thought about the behavior of all the others, right down to the clothes they wore. One woman in the group told me that the goal of such candidness was to stimulate their growth in the Lord. That particular group lasted less than six months because **they focused on pointing out one another's failures. That destroys the church.**

If something is a small matter, it is to be covered.

That is what it means to love. When we think of what God has covered for us, can we not cover for our brothers and sisters in the Lord? ***“Love will cover a multitude of sins.”*** **Some people interpret this verse to mean that if we love enough, it will serve almost as an atonement for our sins; but that is not what it means. The meaning is that love does not seek to expose our neighbor for every petty weakness but to cover him or her from the attacks of the world.**

Matthew Henry:

Verses 7–11

We have here an awful position or doctrine, and an inference drawn from it. The position is that the *end of all things is at hand*. The miserable destruction of the Jewish church and nation foretold by our Saviour is now very near; consequently, the time of their persecution and your sufferings is but very short. Your own life and that of your enemies will soon come to their utmost period. Nay, the world itself will not continue very long. The conflagration will put an end to it; and all things must be swallowed up in an endless eternity. The inference from this comprises a series of exhortations.

1. To sobriety and watchfulness: *“Be you therefore sober, v. 7.*

Let the frame and temper of your minds be grave, stayed, and solid; and observe strict temperance and sobriety in the use of all worldly enjoyments. **Do not suffer yourselves to be caught with your former sins and temptations, v. 3. And watch unto prayer. Take care that you be continually in a calm sober disposition, fit for prayer; and that you be frequent in prayers, lest this end come upon you unawares,”** Lu. 21:34; Mt. 26:40, 41. Learn,

(1.) The consideration of our approaching end is a powerful argument to make us sober in all worldly matters, and earnest in religious affairs.

(2.) Those who would pray to purpose must *watch unto prayer*. They must watch over their own spirits, watch all fit opportunities, and do their duty in the best manner they can.

(3.) The right ordering of the body is of great use to promote the good of the soul. When the appetites and inclinations of the body are restrained and governed by God’s word and true reason, and the interests of the body are submitted to the interests and necessities of the soul, then it is not the soul’s enemy, but its friend and helper.

2. To charity: *And above all things have fervent charity among yourselves, v. 8.*

Here is a noble rule in Christianity. Christians ought to love one another, which implies an affection to their persons, a desire of their welfare, and a hearty endeavour to promote it. This mutual affection

must not be cold, but fervent, that is, sincere, strong, and lasting. This sort of earnest affection is recommended above all things, which shows the importance of it, Colossians 3:14.

It is greater than faith or hope,
1 Co. 13:13.

One excellent effect of it is that ***it will cover a multitude of sins.*** Learn,

- (1.) There ought to be in all Christians a more fervent charity towards one another than towards other men: *Have charity among yourselves.*
- (2.) **He does not say for pagans, for idolaters, or for apostates, but among yourselves. Let brotherly love continue, Heb. 13:1.**
- (3.) There is a special relation between all sincere Christians, and a particular amiableness and good in them, which require special affection.

(4.) (2.) It is not enough for Christians not to bear malice, nor to have common respect for one another, they must intensely and fervently love each other.

(5.) (3.) It is the property of true charity **to cover a multitude of sins. It inclines people to forgive and forget offences against themselves, to cover and conceal the sins of others, rather than aggravate them and spread them abroad.**

(6.) It teaches us to love those who are but weak, and who have been guilty of many evil things before their conversion; and it prepares for mercy at the hand of God, who hath promised to forgive those that forgive others, Mt. 6:14.

◀ 1618. ektenés ▶

Strong's Concordance

ektenés: stretched, fig. zealous, earnest

Original Word: ἐκτενής, ἐς

Part of Speech: Adjective

Transliteration: ektenés

Phonetic Spelling: (ek-ten-ace')

Definition: stretched, zealous, earnest

Usage: intent, constant, strenuous, intense; met: earnest, zealous.

HELPS Word-studies

1618 *ektenēs* (an adjective, derived from 1537 / *ek*, "wholly out" which intensifies *teinō*, "to stretch" which is also the root of English terms, "tension" and "tense") – properly, stretch *out*, i.e. fully because completely taut; (figuratively) at maximum potential, without slack because fully extended to its necessary outcome.

NAS Exhaustive Concordance

Word Origin

from *ekteinó*

Definition

stretched, fig. zealous, earnest

NASB Translation

fervent (1).

Thayer's Greek Lexicon

STRONGS NT 1618: ἐκτενής

ἐκτενής, ἐκτενές (ἐκτείνω), properly, **stretched out**; figuratively, **intent, earnest, assiduous**: προσευχή, Acts 12:5 R G (εὐχή, Ignatius (interpolated) ad Eph. 10 [ET]); δέησις καὶ ἰκεσία, Clement of Rome, 1 Cor. 59, 2 [ET]); ἀγάπη, 1 Peter 4:8. Neuter of the comparative ἐκτενέστερον, as adverb, **more intently, more earnestly**, Luke 22:44 (L brackets WH reject the passage). (ἐκτενής φίλος, Aeschylus suppl. 983; Polybius 22, 5, 4; then very often from Philo on; cf. Lob. ad Phryn., p. 311.)

Strong's Exhaustive Concordance

without ceasing, fervent.

From *ekteino*; intent -- without ceasing, fervent.

see GREEK *ekteino*

Englishman's Concordance

1 Peter 4:8 Adj-AFS

GRK: ἑαυτοὺς ἀγάπην ἐκτενῆ ἔχοντες ὅτι

NAS: keep *fervent* in your love

KJV: all things have *fervent* charity among

INT: yourselves love *fervent* having because

Strong's Greek 1618

1 Occurrence

◀ 1614. ekteino ▶

Strong's Concordance

ekteino: to extend

Original Word: ἐκτείνω

Part of Speech: Verb

Transliteration: ekteino

Phonetic Spelling: (ek-ti'-no)

Definition: to extend

Usage: I stretch out (forth), cast forth (as of an anchor), lay hands on.

NAS Exhaustive Concordance

Word Origin

from *ek* and *teino* (to stretch)

Definition

to extend

NASB Translation

extend (1), lay (2), reached (1), stretch (4), stretched (7), stretching (1).

Thayer's Greek Lexicon

STRONGS NT 1614: ἐκτείνω

ἐκτείνω; future ἐκτενῶ; 1 aorist ἐξέτεινα;

(from Aeschylus, Sophocles, Herodotus down); the Sept. common for שָׁרַף, הִטָּה, and חָלַץ; to

stretch out, stretch forth: τὴν χεῖρα (often in the Sept.), [Matthew 8:3](#); [Matthew](#)

[12:13](#); [Matthew 14:31](#); [Matthew 26:51](#); [Mark 1:41](#); [Mark 3:5](#); [Luke 5:13](#); [Luke 6:10](#); [John](#)

[21:18](#); [Acts 26:1](#); with the addition of ἐπί τινα, over, toward, against one — either to point

out something, [Matthew 12:49](#), or to lay hold of a person in order to do him violence, [Luke](#)

[22:53](#); ἐκτείνειν τὴν χεῖρα εἰς ἴασιν, spoken of God, [Acts 4:30](#); ἀγκύρας, properly, to

carry forward (R. V. lay out) the cable to which the anchor is fastened, i. e. to cast anchor (the

idea of extending the cables runs into that of carrying out and dropping the anchors (Hackett);

cf. B. D. American edition, p. 3009a last paragraph), [Acts 27:30](#). (Compare: ἐπτείνω,

Strong's Exhaustive Concordance

cast, put forth, stretch out.

From [ek](#) and teino (to stretch); to extend -- cast, put forth, stretch forth (out).

see GREEK [ek](#)

[Strong's Greek 1614](#)
[16 Occurrences](#)

◀ 4993. sóphroneó ▶

Strong's Concordance

sóphroneó: to be **of sound mind, i.e. to be temperate**

Original Word: σωφρονέω

Part of Speech: Verb

Transliteration: sóphroneó

Phonetic Spelling: (so-fron-eh'-o)

Definition: to be **of sound mind, to be temperate**

Usage: I am of sound mind, am sober-minded, exercise self-control.

HELPS Word-studies

Cognate: 4993 *sōphronéō* – properly, ***safety-minded***; having a *sober outlook* that reflects true balance.

For the believer, 4993 /*sōphronéō* ("***think shrewdly***") reflects what *God defines is true moderation*.

This God-controlled perspective blends the extremities of truth on both sides of a matter.

See 4998 (*sōphrōn*).

[The whole word-family (root, *sōphro-*) comes from two words: *sōos* ("safe") and *phrēn* ("what regulates life," the root of the English term, "*diaphragm*").

Example: An opera singer controls the length (quality) of their tones by their *diaphragm*, which even controls our ability to breathe and *moderates* heartbeat. This *regulates* ("brings *safety*") to the body, keeping it *properly controlled*.]

NAS Exhaustive Concordance

Word Origin

from *sóphrón*

Definition

to be of sound mind, i.e. to be temperate

NASB Translation

have sound judgment (1), right mind (2), sensible (1), sound judgment (1), sound mind (1).

Thayer's Greek Lexicon

STRONGS NT 4993: σωφρονέω

σωφρονέω, σωφρόνω; 1 aorist imperative σωφρονήσατε; (σώφρων, which see); from Tragg., Xenophon, Plato down; **to be of sound mind**, i. e.

a. to be in one's right mind: of one who has ceased δαιμονίζεσθαι, [Mark 5:15](#); [Luke 8:35](#); opposed to ἐκστηναι, [2 Corinthians 5:13](#), (the σωφρονων and μανεις are contrasted in Plato, de rep. i., p. 331 c.; σωφρονουσαι and μανεισαι, Phaedr., p. 244 b.; ὁ μεμηνως ... ἐσωφρονησε, Apollod. 3, 5, 1, 6).

b. to exercise self-control; i. e. **α. to put a moderate estimate upon oneself, think of oneself soberly**: opposed to ὑπερφρονεῖν, [Romans 12:3](#). **β. to curb one's passions**, [Titus 2:6](#); joined with νήφω (as in Lucian, Nigrin. 6) (R. V. **be of sound mind and be sober**), [1 Peter 4:7](#).

Strong's Exhaustive Concordance

be in right mind, be sober minded

From [sophron](#); to be of sound mind, i.e. Sane, (figuratively) moderate -- be in right mind, be sober (minded), soberly.

see GREEK [sophron](#)

Englishman's Concordance

Mark 5:15 V-PPA-AMS

GRK: ἱματισμένον καὶ σωφρονοῦντα τὸν ἐσχηκότα

NAS: clothed *and in his right mind*, the very man who had had

KJV: and *in his right mind*: and

INT: clothed and *of sound mind* him who had

Luke 8:35 V-PPA-AMS

GRK: ἱματισμένον καὶ σωφρονοῦντα παρὰ τοὺς

NAS: clothed *and in his right mind*; and they became frightened.

KJV: and *in his right mind*: and

INT: clothed and *of sound mind* at the

Romans 12:3 V-PNA

GRK: εἰς τὸ σωφρονεῖν ἐκάστῳ ὡς

NAS: so *as to have sound judgment*, as God

INT: so as *to be sober-minded* to each as

2 Corinthians 5:13 V-PIA-1P

GRK: θεῶ εἴτε σωφρονοῦμεν ὑμῖν

NAS: if *we are of sound mind*, it is for you.

KJV: or whether *we be sober*, [it is] for your cause.

INT: [it was] to God or *are sober-minded [it is]* for you

Titus 2:6 V-PNA

GRK: ὡσαύτως παρακάλει σωφρονεῖν

NAS: urge the young men *to be sensible*;

KJV: likewise exhort *to be sober minded*.

INT: in like manner exhort *to be self-controlled*

1 Peter 4:7 V-AMA-2P

GRK: τέλος ἤγγικεν σωφρονήσατε οὖν καὶ

NAS: therefore, *be of sound judgment* and sober

KJV: be ye therefore *sober*, and watch

INT: end has drawn near *be sober-minded* therefore and

◀ 3525. néphó ▶

Strong's Concordance

néphó: to be sober, to abstain from wine

Original Word: νήφω

Part of Speech: Verb

Transliteration: néphó

Phonetic Spelling: (nay'-fo)

Definition: to be sober, to abstain from wine

Usage: (lit: I am sober), I am calm (vigilant), circumspect.

HELPS Word-studies

3525 *nēphō* – properly, to be sober (not drunk), not intoxicated; (figuratively) free from illusion, i.e. from the intoxicating influences of sin (like the impact of selfish passion, greed, etc.).

3525 /*nēphō* ("be sober, unintoxicated") refers to having presence of mind (clear judgment), enabling someone to be *temperate* (self-controlled). 3525 /*nēphō* ("uninfluenced by intoxicants") means to have "one's wits (faculties) about them," which is opposite of being irrational.

NAS Exhaustive Concordance

Word Origin

a prim. word

Definition

to be sober, to abstain from wine

NASB Translation

keep sober (1), sober (5).

Thayer's Greek Lexicon

STRONGS NT 3525: νήφω

νήφω; 1 aorist imperative 2 person plural νήψατε;
from Theognis, Sophocles, Xenophon down; **to be sober**; in the N. T. everywhere tropically, **to be calm and collected in spirit**; **to be temperate, dispassionate, circumspect**: 1 Thessalonians 5:6, 8; 2 Timothy 4:5; 1 Peter 1:13; 1 Peter 5:8; εἰς τὰς προσευχάς, **unto (the offering of) prayer**, 1 Peter 4:7. (Synonym: see ἀγρυπνέω; and on the word see Ellicott on Timothy, the passage cited Compare: ἀνανήφω, ἐκνήφω.)

Strong's Exhaustive Concordance

to be sober, to abstain from wine

Of uncertain affinity: to abstain from wine (keep sober), i.e. (figuratively) be discreet -- be sober, watch.

Englishman's Concordance

1 Thessalonians 5:6 V-PSA-1P

GRK: γρηγορῶμεν καὶ νήφωμεν

NAS: do, but let us be alert *and sober*.

KJV: let us watch and *be sober*.

INT: we should watch and *we should be sober*

1 Thessalonians 5:8 V-PSA-1P

GRK: ἡμέρας ὄντες νήφωμεν ἐνδυσάμενοι θώρακα

NAS: But since we are of [the] day, *let us be sober*, having put

KJV: of the day, *be sober*, putting on

INT: of day being *should be sober* having put on [the] breastplate

2 Timothy 4:5 V-PMA-2S

GRK: σὺ δὲ νήφε ἐν πᾶσιν

NAS: *But you, be sober* in all things,

KJV: But *watch* thou in

INT: you moreover *be sober* in all things

1 Peter 1:13 V-PPA-NMP

GRK: διανοίας ὑμῶν νήφοντες τελείως ἐλπίζατε

NAS: your minds *for action, keep sober* [in spirit], fix your hope

KJV: mind, *be sober*, and hope

INT: mind of you *being sober* perfectly hope

1 Peter 4:7 V-AMA-2P

GRK: οὖν καὶ νήψατε εἰς προσευχάς

NAS: be of sound judgment *and sober* [spirit] for the purpose of prayer.

KJV: sober, and *watch* unto prayer.

INT: therefore and *be watchful* unto prayers

1 Peter 5:8 V-AMA-2P

GRK: Νήψατε γρηγορήσατε ὅ

NAS: *Be of sober* [spirit], be on the alert.

KJV: *Be sober*, be vigilant; because

INT: *Be sober* watch the

Strong's Greek 3525

6 Occurrences