

7.25.21 ~ 1Peter 4:7-11, Serving Christ in the Last Days: Part Two

Read **1Peter 4:7-11**... Following Christ is costly! For you are immediately set at odds with the rest of the world; the world is not your friend, because the world serves Satan and cannot do anything that is pleasing to God.

All people are sinners, whether believers in Christ or those who reject Christ; but true believers will hate sin and love righteousness, while unbelievers are controlled by sin and they cannot exhibit or experience righteousness.

See **1Peter 4:7-8a**... With sound judgement and sober spirit for the purpose of prayer (i.e., coming before God reverently and expectantly), we are to then to earnestly love one another.

The kind of love being referenced here is *agape love*: it is unconditional, willful, sacrificial love; this is the love of action not feeling, intentionally doing what is needed for someone to have what they require.

If you are God's child you have this love from God, for God, and for all those who belong to God (see **1Peter 1:22-25**).

1John 5:1-2, "Whoever believes that Jesus is the Christ is born of God, and whoever loves the Father loves the *child* born of Him. By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God and observe His commandments."

1Peter 4:8b says, "love covers a multitude of sins." How does that work?

Well, first of all, God's love covers our sins, as expressed in **Hebrews 10:16-18**, "'This is the covenant that I will make with them after those days, says the Lord: I will put My laws upon their heart, and on their mind I will write them,' He then says, 'And their sins and their lawless deeds I will remember no more.' Now where there is forgiveness of these things, there is no longer any offering [or covering]for sin."

God doesn't hold our sins against us, because Jesus has already paid the full redemption price for our sins (cf. **Romans 6:23; 5:8; 8:1**).

Because God's love covers our sins, we ought also to forgive those who sin against us, as we are taught to pray (**Matthew 6:12**), "Forgive us our debts [transgressions, sins], as we also have forgiven our debtors" [those who have sinned or transgressed against us].

Ephesians 4:32, "Be kind to one another, tender-hearted, forgiving each other, just as God in Christ also has forgiven you."

See **1Peter 4:9**... This is not talking about having some of your Christian friends over for dinner and games. The phrase, "to be hospitable" literally means, "to love strangers." This is talking about loving people you don't really know, people you may not like when you get to know them, or perhaps people who don't like you.

Matthew 25:35-40, "For I was hungry, and you gave Me *something* to eat; I was thirsty, and you gave Me *something* to drink; I was a stranger, and you invited Me in; naked, and you clothed Me; I was sick, and you visited Me; I was in prison, and you came to Me.' Then the righteous will answer Him, 'Lord, when did we see You hungry, and feed You, or thirsty, and give You *something* to drink? And when did we see You a stranger, and invite You in, or naked, and clothe You? When did we see You sick, or in prison, and come to

You?’ The King will answer and say to them, ‘Truly I say to you, to the extent that you did it to one of these brothers of Mine, *even the least of them*, you did it to Me.’”

But look again at **1Peter 4:9**, this is not just about the physical act of supplying what someone needs; this is also very much about the attitude with which the act is done, notice, “without complaint,” i.e., without any sense of being forced to do what is unpleasant, or a burden, without any external coercion or internal guilt; the agape love of God should move us to love others on God’s behalf.

You see, we are all sinners, but God’s love covers over a multitude of sins, ineptitudes, ethnic differences, biases, pet peeves, personal preferences, etc.

John 13:34-35, “A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another, even as I have loved you, that you also love one another. By this all men will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another.”

See **1Peter 4:10**... Every Christian, every child of God, every true believer and follower of Jesus Christ, has received a special gift from God that is to be used for building up the family of God, for serving one another; in the same way that each of our body parts, although quite different, are important for the proper functioning of our body (see **1Corinthians 12:1, 4-7, 11, 14-21**)

The truth is, each believer is a unique gift from God to the Family of Believers, having been equipped in some special way; and we each are to “employ” [meaning to live out] our gift, as a “good steward” or manager of this gift, i.e., obediently serving with sound judgement and sober spirit, prayerfully (see **1Peter 4:7**).

The spiritual gifts of God are expressions of the manifold [multi-faceted, diverse, bountiful] grace of God; these gifts are not given for the personal use or personal edification of any individual (**1Corinthians 12:7**), “to each one is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good,” for the whole Family of God (**1Corinthians 12:12**), “For even as the body is one and *yet* has many members, and all the members of the body, though they are many, are one body, so also is Christ,” **27**, “Now you are Christ’s body, and individually members of it.”

See **1Peter 4:11**... There are two major groups of spiritual gifts given here: **1Peter 4:11a** cites “speaking gifts,” and **1Peter 4:11b** cites “serving gifts.”

Speaking gifts [preaching & teaching], are to be in alignment and under the authority of, God’s Word (**Ephesians 4:11-13**), “And He gave some... ..pastors and teachers, for the equipping of the saints for the work of service, to the building up of the body of Christ, until we all attain to the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a mature man, to the measure of the stature which belongs to the fullness of Christ.”

Serving gifts are to be employed by the strength, wisdom, power, and leading of the Holy Spirit (**Romans 8:9**), “If anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he does not belong to Him.” (**Romans 8:11**), “But if the Spirit of Him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, He who raised Christ Jesus from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through His Spirit who dwells in you,” (**Colossians 3:17, 23**), “Whatever you do in word or deed, *do* all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks through Him to God the Father.” “Whatever you do, do your work heartily, as for the Lord rather than for men.”

2Timothy 3:16-17, "All Scripture is inspired by God [God-breathed] and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness; so that the man [woman, and child] of God may be [completely], equipped for every good work" [i.e., every word or deed that brings honor and glory to God].

See **1Peter 4:11c...** Peter tells us the reason we are to actively and earnestly be using our gifts, as we serve one another, is to glorify God. Our major purpose, as Christians, is to bring honor, glory, and praise, to God the Father, through God the Son in Jesus Christ, and this is made effectual by the power of God the Holy Spirit dwelling in us.

Romans 16:25-27, "Now to Him who is able to establish you according to my gospel and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery which has been kept secret for long ages past, but now is manifested, and by the Scriptures of the prophets, according to the commandment of the eternal God, has been made known to all the nations, *leading* to obedience of faith; to the only wise God, through Jesus Christ, be the glory forever. Amen."

Ephesians 3:20-21, "Now to Him who is able to do far more abundantly beyond all that we ask or think, according to the power that works within us, to Him *be* the glory in the church and in Christ Jesus to all generations forever and ever. Amen."

1Timothy 1:17, "Now to the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only God, *be* honor and glory forever and ever. Amen."

Jude 24-25, "Now to Him who is able to keep you from stumbling, and to make you stand in the presence of His glory blameless with great joy, to the only God our Savior, through Jesus Christ our Lord, be glory, majesty, dominion and authority, before all time and now and forever. Amen."

Look again at **1Peter 4:11c...** Everything we do is, "so that in all things God may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom belongs the glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen." The Christian's responsibility in all things God, is to glorify God through Jesus Christ, but notice then it says, "*to whom* belongs the glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen."

So, is it God or Jesus Christ to whom belongs the glory and the dominion forever and ever? What do the Scriptures tell us?

1Timothy 1:1, "Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus according to the commandment of God our Savior, and of Christ Jesus, who is our hope."

1Timothy 2:4-5, God our Savior, who desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth. For there is one God, *and* one mediator also between God and men, *the* man Christ Jesus.

1Timothy 4:10, "We have fixed our hope on the living God, who is the Savior of all men, especially of believers."

Titus 1:4, "Grace and peace from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Savior."

2Corinthians 13:14, "The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, be with you all."

Clearly, all glory and dominion belongs to both, God in Christ, and Christ in God.

John 1:1-3, "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things came into being through Him, and apart from Him nothing came into being that has come into being."

John 1:14, "And the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us, and we saw His glory, glory as of the only begotten from the Father, full of grace and truth."

John 1:18, "No one has seen God at any time; the only begotten God who is in the bosom of the Father, He has explained *Him*."

The people cried out to Him (**John 6:28-29**), "'What shall we do, so that we may work the works of God?' Jesus answered and said to them, 'This is the work of God, that you believe in Him whom He has sent.'"

John 10:30, "I and the Father are one."

John 14:6-7, "Jesus said, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father but through Me. If you had known Me, you would have known My Father also; from now on you know Him, and have seen Him."

So, how are we to serve God the Father, through God the Son, by the power of God the Holy Spirit living in us, during these Last Days? By telling others about Jesus Christ: crucified, resurrected, and coming again.

1John 5:11-13, "And the testimony is this, that God has given us eternal life, and this life is in His Son. He who has the Son has the life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have the life. These things I have written to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, so that you may know that you have eternal life.

Romans 10:13-15, "'Whoever will call on the name of the Lord will be saved.' How then will they call on Him in whom they have not believed? How will they believe in Him whom they have not heard? And how will they hear without a preacher? How will they preach unless they are sent? Just as it is written, 'How beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news of good things!'"

Matthew 28:19-20, "Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age."

Pastor Mike

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