

# **The Church in the World: Living in the End Times**

## **1<sup>st</sup> Peter 4:7-11**

### **Intro**

It is all too easy to focus on the end times and how everything will come to an end as the LORD returns. But the whole point of the end times is to show us what we are to live for, because we know how it will end, we can focus comfortably on our current lives and how to live for God.

Peter tells his readers that the end is already near. This he said almost 2,000 years ago, so certainly the end is nearer now than it has ever been, and we must live for God while we can.

### **Five Marks of a Church that Understands that the End is near**

#### **Such A Church will...**

##### **1. Maintain a Clear-Minded Prayer Life**

The Church should always understand what they are to pray for and how they are to pray so that they will always be ready at every moment for the return of the LORD. Be steadfast and clear minded to be ready for any spiritual or even physical event that the LORD puts in your life.

Do not let your mind wander into useless, sinful things that will lead into evil expressed inwardly and outwardly. Be in control of your thoughts and of your mind. How can a mind that is out of control be ready for adversity? How can you expect to pray well if your thoughts always wander? Always be in control of yourself at all times for the LORD's sake.

“Prayer is arguably the most objective measure of our dependence on God, the things you pray about shows what you trust God to handle, and the things that you don't pray for are the things that you think that you can handle.”

##### **2. Continually Demonstrate Forgiving Love**

If you live a life of love, you will be fulfilling the Law. For Jesus said that the greatest command is to worship the LORD with all your heart, soul, mind, and strength, and the second is to love your neighbor as yourself.

Jesus' disciples will be known by how they love each other and by how they love all those who are around them and treat others with kindness and respect.

### **3. Practice Joyful Hospitality**

Welcome your brothers and sisters in the Church whom you do not know and make them know that where they are is a place of Godly hospitality. Get to know those who go with you to Church services and talk with them. You do not necessarily need to become friends with them but let them know that you are there for them by the grace of Jesus Christ.

### **4. Sacrificially Serve One Another**

Each person who has been born again by a work of the Holy Spirit has a spiritual gift that can be used and must be used to serve the church and continue to do the work that God has laid out for you. You are to serve one another.

You do not always get to use your spiritual gifts every day, but you must always be ready to use it to the glory of God to show the work that he has done in you. If you do not know what your spiritual gift is, pray on it and ask others what it is you can do to help or think of something that you would like to do for the Church.

### **5. Be Consumed by a Desire for God to be Glorified**

The purpose of all things is to glorify the LORD, God Almighty. We must constantly remember to praise the LORD and give Him glory. The only way we can do a good job is because of God. The only way that we could ever do good things is because of the power of God. Therefore, remember who to glorify for "your" accomplishments.

### **Questions**

Do you understand that the end is near?

Do you maintain a clear-minded prayer life?

Do you continually demonstrate forgiving love?

Do you joyfully practice hospitality?

Do you sacrificially serve the body of Christ?

Are you consumed by a desire for God to be glorified?