Live Like There Is No Tomorrow
Message 18 in I Peter Sermon Series
I Peter 4:7-11

As we continue with our series of messages from the Book of I Peter, let’s pick up the record where we left off last week.

Please turn with me in your Bibles to I Peter 4:7-11.

P R A Y E R

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Introduction

What would you do if you knew TODAY was your last day on earth?

Recently we were deeply saddened to hear the news of the tragic shooting deaths of those six innocent victims outside a Safe Way Grocery Store in Tucson, Arizona. Do you think any one of those victims awoke that morning thinking, “This will be my last day on earth?”

The fact is, life comes to an end for nearly 7,000 people in America every single day……7,000! That’s a lot of people!

At some time or another someone has challenged all of us to “Live every day as though it could be your last” or “Live like there’s no tomorrow!” But how many of us truly live our lives that way?
Peter begins verse 7 with these very sobering words:

“The end of all things is near.”

Let those words sink in: (slowly) “THE END……OF ALL THINGS……IS NEAR.”

Now what does Peter mean by that? He is telling us “the climax of history” is at hand! Christ is coming back soon! Our trials and troubles will soon be over!

Today there are many who “scoff” at what Peter said. They would argue that its been over 2,000 years since Christ left here and He still hasn’t come back. How could Peter or anyone for that matter say “the end of all things is near?”

What those scoffers fail to understand is that God’s view of time and ours’ are greatly different.

Peter tells us in II Peter 3:8, 9 “But do not forget this one things, dear friends: With the LORD a day is like a thousand years, and a thousand years are like a day. The LORD is not slow in keeping His promise, as some understand slowness. He is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance.”

You see, from GOD’S view point, if Christ’s return was NEAR two thousand years ago when Peter penned this letter......... then Christ return was even NEARER one thousand years ago. Well another thousand years has now passed and think how much NEARER we are NOW to the return of Christ.
Well if “the end of all things is near” shouldn’t those of us who are Christians just stop making plans for the future……sell everything we own……and just go sit on a hillside and wait for Jesus to come back? Absolutely not! We must continue to live faithfully until the Lord comes to get us or until our life on earth has ended, whichever comes first.

As we continue on in our scripture text, Peter now gives us five ways we can “Live Like There’s No Tomorrow.”

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First of all……

I. **Think Like There’s No Tomorrow** (v.7b)

Verse 7b The end of all things is near. Therefore be **CLEAR MINDED**.

1. **CLEAR MINDED** The Greek word Peter used here for clear minded is the same word used in MARK 5 to describe the mental state of the demon possessed man AFTER Jesus drove the legion of demons out of him. He was in his “right mind”……he was “clear minded.”

Quite literally, to be “CLEAR MINDED” means, To remain “CALM and COLLECTED.”

**Illustration:** Think of a quarterback in a PLAY OFF football game. There’s under two minutes left in the game. His team is behind and he needs to move the team 80 yards to score the winning touchdown. He knows if his team doesn’t score, they will lose the game……go home……and there will be NO TOMORROW!
So just as “cool as a cucumber” that quarterback quickly, yet methodically, moves his team down the field. He throws a series of screen passes toward the left or right sideline so the receiver can step out of bounds and stop the clock after he catches the ball.

Finally with time running out, the quarterback takes the snap! Defensive lineman are blitzing toward him from the right and left..........he doesn’t panic…..instead he calmly steps into the pocket........and rifles a 30 yard pass down field right over the outstretched hands of the defensive cornerbacl and into the hands of his receiver..........who races toward the END ZONE!  TOUCHDOWN!  They win the game!

If that quarterback had panicked or lost control of his emotions the outcome would have been different, wouldn’t it? But because the quarterback remained “clear minded” and kept his head in the game, he was able to lead his team to victory.

2. Brothers and sisters, the LORD has issued the “two minute warning”........ "the end of all things is near!” We can feel the stress and pressure increasing.

Can any of you ever remember a time when people have been more ANGRY and FRUSTRATED than they are right now? And as conditions in this world continue to deteriorate we are going to see that anger and frustration continue to escalate.

3. BROTHERS and SISTERS, in these stressful last days, we have got to “keep our emotions in check!” We must remain CALM, COLLECTED and CLEAR-MINDED and keep moving toward the GOAL LINE! How do we do that? We PRAY.... and we KEEP ON PRAYING!
II. Behave Like There’s No Tomorrow (v.7b)

1. Whereas being CLEAR MINDED has to do with the way we THINK, being SELF-CONTROLLED has to do with the way we BEHAVE.

2. That word “self-control” means: “to restrain one’s emotions or behavior.” “to bridle one’s passions.” “To enforce boundaries upon oneself.”

3. If you knew you would be meeting the LORD face to face before this time tomorrow, what would you change about your behavior today? What habits would you cease immediately? What would you CHANGE about your life over the next 24 HRS?

3. You see, the truth is, the BEHAVIOR of many Christians shows they don’t really believe CHRIST will or could come back tomorrow or that they might not live to see tomorrow.

   Many Christians are still clinging to their old sinful behavior as though they are going to live to be an old man or old woman and they have plenty of time between now and then to give up their sinful habits!

4. Brother or sister, if you happen to be one of those who thinks that way, WHAT IF YOU’RE WRONG? WHAT IF YOU ARE WRONG?

5. What does a SELF-CONTROLLED Christian look like, you ask?

   “A self-controlled Christian is not controlled by sinful desires or lusts. He may make good money, but he is not in love with money. He may own nice material things, but he doesn’t value things more than God or family.”
He enjoys life but his hobbies and recreational activities don’t dominate so much of his time and attention he neglects time with the Lord and his family. A self-controlled Christian doesn’t get rattled and fly off the handle when things don’t go his way or he encounters problems. A self-controlled Christian is a Spirit-controlled Christian.”

Think Like There’s No Tomorrow!

Behave Like There’s No Tomorrow!

Thirdly………..

III. **Love** Like There’s No Tomorrow (v. 8)

v. 8 Above all, love each other deeply, because love covers over a multitude of sins.

1. Let’s break this sentence down to get its full meaning.

   (a) Peter says, **“Above all.”** That means, “put this right at the TOP of the LIST!” Make this your “number one priority!”

   (b) **“Love each other deeply.”** The word Peter used for “deeply” here might better be translated, “fervently.” It was an athletic term used to describe an athlete straining his muscles to the limit.
Think of a horse in full gallop......or......a runner stretching out his chest to touch the tape first at the finish line........ or a receiver extending his body straight out to catch the football......or......a third baseman stretching to catch a hot line drive down the third base line.

To “love deeply” means to stretch out our love to its fullest extent, like Christ stretched out his love for us on the cross.

(c) Next Peter says, “Because love covers over a multitude of sins.” Now what does that mean?

It means we love people even though they fail us..... we love people even when they disappoint us...... we love people even when they say or do hurtful things to us......we love people even when they don’t measure up to our expectations.

And why are we to do this? Because all of us are guilty! Everyone of us has failed somebody.....disappointed somebody.....said something that hurt somebody..... done something that hurt somebody.....or failed to live up to somebody’s expectations! Everyone of us without exception!

And what is the ONE THING that “covers over” that multitude of SINS? LOVE! NOT HUMAN LOVE, BUT THE LOVE OF JESUS CHRIST WITHIN US!

**THINK** like there’s no tomorrow!
**BEHAVE** like there’s no tomorrow!
**LOVE** like there’s no tomorrow!
Forthly........

IV. **Share Like There’s No Tomorrow** (v. 9)

v. 9 Offer hospitality to one another without grumbling.

1. That word *“hospitality”* means *“to show practical kindness toward strangers, visitors, and guests.”*

   Remember at the time Peter wrote this, many of these persecuted Christians had lost their homes and all their material possessions. Many of them had to keep moving from one place to another. They often had to depend upon the kindness and hospitality of others to provide them with a place to stay and food to eat.

   And we must keep in mind there were very few Church buildings at that time, so Christians had to open up their homes to fellow Christians to join with them in worship.

2. When you and I show HOSPITALITY toward someone it means we SHARE what GOD has given to us with someone in NEED.

   GOD never intended for us to be “hoarders.” Anything GOD has placed in our hand is meant to be shared with others.

3. Offering hospitality might mean giving someone a roof over their head until they can get back on their feet. It might mean taking care of someone until their health improves. It might mean fixing meals ..........or.....giving away some clothes......or giving someone some money when they are going through a financial crisis.

   It might mean giving some gas money to someone when they are having to take a loved one back and forth to cancer treatments. It might mean paying for a Christian brother or sister’s hotel stay when they have had to go out of state for a loved one’s funeral.

   It might mean mowing someone’s yard or hauling off their trash for them when they are laid up after a surgery.
4. Brothers and sisters, we won’t be taking any of our material things with us when we leave here, so while we are here, LET’S SHARE WHAT WE HAVE LIKE THERE’S NO TOMORROW!

**THINK** like there’s no tomorrow!  
**BEHAVE** like there’s no tomorrow!  
**LOVE** like there’s no tomorrow!  
**SHARE** like there’s no tomorrow!

But wait, Peter gives us one more……..

V. **Serve Like There’s No Tomorrow** (v.10, 11)

v. 10 Each one should use whatever gift he has received to SERVE OTHERS, faithfully administering God’s grace in its various forms.

v. 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

1. You notice Peter describes our gifts as “administrating God’s grace in its various forms.” The term Peter uses here for “various forms” has the same meaning as “multi-colored fabric” or “a tapestry.”

2. As Christians, GOD has blessed all of us with a GIFT or in some cases, several GIFTS, that we are to use in SERVICE for others.

   What is your GIFT? Well think of that one thing you really enjoy doing. That one thing you believe God has given you the talent and ability to do.

3. Perhaps you are comfortable SPEAKING in front of a CROWD and you enjoy TEACHING others the word of GOD! That’s your GIFT!
- Maybe you enjoy VISITING the SICK and those in NURSING HOMES. That’s your GIFT!

-Maybe you enjoy FIXING FOOD and carrying it to the sick or needy. That’s your GIFT!

-Maybe you enjoy SENDING OUT CARDS or WRITING NOTES of ENCOURAGEMENT. That’s your GIFT!

-Maybe you are a GOOD LISTENER and you like to give godly counsel to people are going through problems. That’s your GIFT!

-Maybe you are have GOOD HANDS and A GOOD BACK and you enjoy doing manual labor to help others who can’t do for themselves. That’s your GIFT!

-Maybe you aren’t physically able to help others, but you have a generous spirit and don’t mind giving money to help people. That’s your GIFT!

-Maybe you are a GOOD ORGANIZER and have strong ADMINISTRATIVE skills. That’s your GIFT!

-Maybe you really enjoy WORKING WITH YOUNG PEOPLE. That’s your GIFT!

4. You see, we all have different GIFTS! And when we blend all our GIFTS together in SERVICE to others, GOD makes us into a beautiful tapestry!

5. I don’t know if you have ever thought about this, but all these types of SERVICE we do now will cease once our life on earth is over. There won’t be any sick to visit in heaven. There won’t be any poor to give money to in heaven. There won’t be any Sunday School classes to teach. There won’t be any need to prepare food to take to a home of someone who has lost a loved one, because there will be NO MORE DEATH.

6. This means while we are here, let’s use our GOD-GIVEN GIFTS to SERVE OTHERS all we can. Let us SERVE LIKE THERE’S NO TOMORROW!
CONCLUSION

In World War II, a little French village had a statue of JESUS in their town square. When bombing came, the statue was damaged and pieces were broken off.

The people of the village stored the broken off pieces and after the war they started to rebuild the statue. Much to their dismay, the only pieces of the statue they couldn’t find were the HANDS OF JESUS.

The people of the village decided that rather than leave the statue of JESUS standing with no hands, they would just take the statue down. But on the day they planned to dismantle the statue, someone had placed a sign at the bottom of the statue which read: ‘HE HAS NO HANDS BUT OURS.’

HE HAS NO HANDS BUT OURS.
HE HAS NO FEET BUT OURS.
HE HAS NO EYES BUT OURS.
HE HAS NO LIPS BUT OURS.

We are the body of CHRIST in the world! But according to God’s word, the Church’s days in this world are numbered. As Peter has told us this morning, “the end of all things is near.”

How long do we have? When will Christ come to get His Church? Only the LORD knows the answer to that question.

That is why we must be prepared at ALL TIMES! That is why WE MUST LIVE LIKE THERE’S NO TOMORROW!