

Watching and ready may we be,  
As those who long their Lord to see.

### Notes

## The Epistle of First Peter

### "Living With The End In View"

1 Peter 4:7

### Introduction

1. It may be a concern to many to speak of the dead who now live according to God in the Spirit (v. 6), but there is an issue to influence us who live--the coming of Christ.

2. Peter says this is near (v. 7). The perfect tense shows there has been previous approach. Though variable, the word distant is to be taken in the light of eternity, hence by this standard it is very near (cf. 2 Cor. 4:17; 2 Peter 3:8,9).

3. What difference should it make in our lives that Christ is coming soon? It should mean that we "live with the end in view." How will this affect us? Let the following suggestions be accepted as actions by which to live:--

#### 1. An ordered life v. 7.

"Be sober" means to "keep sound-minded." The NEB translates this: "lead an ordered and sober life." The persecutions and unrest of the early church times is patent, but what about our own. Frankly, with riots, social tensions, political upheaval, etc.--we live in days to demand "sound-mindedness." We need to baptize our minds in verses like Isa. 26:3 and Phil. 4:7.

#### 2. A praying life. v. 7.

"Watch in prayers" depicts another wonderful action of a faithful servant of God in view of His coming. The verb "watch" comes from a verb meaning to "abstain from wine." It has the idea of being calm and circumspect. What a challenging call for today. But the resultant alertness is to be in the area of prayers. The plural form of "prayers" suggests many acts of prayer and many forms of prayer. Beloved, here is a

clarion call for prayer, but look around you--prayer is on the decline in the fast moving pace of our day. God help us to be in the vanguard of those who differ with this and let us rise to pray. Pray alone (Matt. 6:6), pray with others (Matt. 18:19-20), and pray continually (Eph. 6:18).

3. A loving life. v. 8.

It is not natural to have persistent general love "among yourselves". This must be the work of the Holy Spirit (Rom. 5:5). The NEB translates this phrase: "Keep your love for one another at full strength". No one who is on the inside of any local church is ignorant of this great need. Far too often a church assembly is a hot bed of mistrust, bickering, and strife. God reminds His own that "above all"--first among His own--should be love for one another. Why? If there is true love, there will be found ways and means to understand one another (1 Cor. 13:1-13). In view of His imminent return, love one another!

4. A friendly life. v. 9.

The original text uses a term which means "love of strangers". In the earth church this was necessary in view of persecution by kinfolk and the contamination of heathen inns. The same reasons might be advanced for today! But the point is: believers are to be those who open their homes to friends and strangers. Peter adds that this is to be done "without murmuring" (cf. Acts 6:1 for same word). Today's activities have all but closed the door for friendly interchange amongst God's people. There is a great and crying need for simple, sincere, and loving friendliness. In view of the end--be friendly. Who would want to be caught up without having been an open-house Christian!

5. A busy life. v. 10.

This is not a spiritual conundrum. Things do move

fast today, but this is no excuse for not being occupied in God's service. God has entrusted every believer with some grace gift. This is His special endowment for you! God has made us trustees of these spiritual gifts. We must use them. In doing this, we will minister (verb for "deacon") to one another. Isn't that a blessed thought? Oh, far too many are "at ease in Zion" (Amos 6:1). The need for workers--just workers--is fantastic. In view of His soon return, get busy with one another. Your personal work and movements will never make up for what you do in cooperation with others!

6. A witnessing life. v. 11.

When a believer speaks, he is indeed a "mouthpiece for God." The ability to speak is that which God gives (cf. Zech. 4:6). It is true that formal and planned speaking is in view here, but so are the blessed opportunities of faithful witnessing. "The end of all things is at hand." This is a prime motivation for speaking up concerning Christ. Shouldn't you tell someone about Him before He comes (Psa. 107:2)?

Conclusion

Since Christ is coming soon, we should have changed lives of order, prayer, love, friendliness, busyness, and witnessing. Have you really felt this need to view things as near the end?

"A little while!" Our Lord shall come,  
And we shall wander here no more;  
He'll take us to our Father's home,  
Where He for us has gone before;  
To dwell with Him, to see His face,  
And sing the glories of His grace.

"A little while!" He'll come again!  
Let us the precious hours redeem;  
Our only grief to give Him pain,  
Our joy to serve and follow Him,