

DEVOTIONAL GUIDE | July 25 - July 29, 2022

1 Peter 4:7-11

DAY ONE | Understand Their Story

Read 1 Peter 4:7-11. Peter is going to give a number of commands in this passage, so we need to understand the context of why he is giving these commands.

- Partway through verse 7 is the word “therefore”. Read what is written immediately before the “therefore” to see what motivation Peter gives for the commands which will follow.
- Note each imperative (command) listed in verses 7-10. When you realize that Peter's motivation for obedience (the first part of verse 7) applies to each of these commands, how does it affect your understanding of these commands?
- Verse 10 calls on recipients of God's grace to be “good stewards” of it - what does it mean to be a steward of something?

Pray today in reflection upon and thanksgiving for the God who has given you all good things.

DAY TWO | Understand Their Story

Re-read 1 Peter 4:7-11, focussing on verses 10 and 11. We are going to spend time considering the source of our gifts and their purposes.

- In verse 11, Peter identifies two categories of gifts - what are they?
- How are those who are given the gifts of speaking to express that gift? Read Romans 3:2; when Paul says that the Jews were entrusted with “the oracles of God”, he means that they had the very word of God in the Scriptures. What does this mean for those who speak?
- Who supplies the strength to those who serve?

Pray today in supplication that you would recognize the Giver of all good gifts, both in yourself and in the lives of those whom you see and hear serving and speaking in His name and for His glory.

DAY THREE | Connect to His Story

Re-read 1 Peter 4:7-11, meditating specifically on verse 8. Peter calls us to love, but what does that look like, and how did it look in Jesus' life? Remember that Peter walked and talked with His Saviour!

- Read Matthew 24:3-14, paying close attention to Jesus' words in verse 12 - what is His warning for how people will act in the last days?
- Peter says that "love covers a multitude of sins." What does he mean by that? Read the conversation between Jesus and Peter in Matthew 18:21-22. What is the act of love in this passage?
- According to Matthew 9:6, who had authority on earth to forgive sins?

Pray today in thanksgiving. If you are a Christian, thank God for forgiving you and covering your sins with His love! If you are not a Christian, ask for God's forgiveness! His love is big enough to cover your sins too!

DAY FOUR | Connect to His Story

Re-read 1 Peter 4:7-11. Remember that this passage begins with the phrase "the end of all things is at hand." How did Jesus engage with "the last days"?

- If you have time, read all of Matthew 24:36-25:13. What is the repeated theme of the parables that Jesus speaks about (hint: see Matthew 24:42, 44, 50, and 25:13)?
- Why would Jesus repeat and emphasize the truth that nobody knows the time of His return? How would that encourage His followers to live?

Pray today in reflection and confession about the times in your life that you have lived as though His promises about His return were not true. In what ways, today, might Jesus be encouraging you to respond to the truth that His return is imminent?

DAY FIVE | Apply to your Story

Let's take some time today to consider how our lives are to be changed and how our actions and motivations are to be challenged by this passage. Re-read 1 Peter 4:7-11 a final time.

- If you knew you only had a limited time left to live, which of the commands given by Peter would you feel the most compelled to act on? Are there any that you think you would have difficulty with?
 - Be self-controlled and sober minded
 - Keep loving one another earnestly
 - Show hospitality to one another without grumbling
 - Use your gift(s) to serve other
- Based on your answer to the questions above, is this Spirit convicting you to do anything specific today or in the near future, because the end of all things IS near?"

Pray today in supplication, that you might live "as a good steward of God's varied grace" (1 Peter 4:10) doing all things to glorify God through Christ (1 Peter 4:11). Ask for God to give you opportunity to display this to others.
