



*<sup>7</sup>But the end of all things is at hand: be ye therefore sober, and watch unto prayer. <sup>8</sup>And above all things have fervent charity among yourselves: for charity shall cover the multitude of sins. <sup>9</sup>Use hospitality one to another without grudging. <sup>10</sup>As every man hath received the gift, even so minister the same one to another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God. <sup>11</sup>If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God; if any man minister, let him do it as of the ability which God giveth: that God in all things may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom be praise and dominion for ever and ever. Amen. (1 Peter 4:7-11)*

As the righteous converge on the Banks of Jordan Waters, the mighty Shore Batteries of God will level their barrels from the far side on the enemy behind and lay down a judgment of fire and devastation on those unholy minions of Satan who pursue. The first pursuing army of Pharaoh was destroyed by water at the Red Sea crossing - the second shall be destroyed by the "consuming Fire of God at the Banks of Jordan. (see Heb 12:29) Of course my reference to those Banks is figurative of the passing of the righteous into glory, and the terrific consummation by fire of the wicked and its worldly platform.

So what are the profound truths that God reveals in the text today, and of what meaning shall we make of it?

### **I. The Solemn Truth Here Announced**

*But the end of all things is at hand: be ye therefore sober, and watch unto prayer.* The end of what things?

1. The end of your earthly engagements is at hand. The Open Door made available by our Lord Jesus Christ will remain open as long as the full complement of invited guests have arrived for the Marriage Feast. Once the last qualified and invited guest arrives, the Door will be shut and those who are not worthy by faith and grace will be excluded. There will be no recourse for those late comers when the end comes finally.

2. The end of your worldly enjoyments is at hand. The illicit desires of youth and even old age will have come to an end. I once heard an old New Orleans preacher tell the story of old Joe Larosa who lived a decadent life of drinking, gambling, adultery, and a seamy life of sin and indifference to God. One day, old Joe breathed his last

breath and fell into the arms of the Angel of Death. The hearse, on the way to the grave, passed by Old Joe's favorite drinking' hole, but Old Joe paid no mind at all - he was indifferent to it. It passed by the house of prostitution that Old Joe frequented, but Old Joe was completely indifferent to that sordid establishment. It passed by the gambling casino and tobacco store that Old Joe loved in his heyday, but Old Joe paid no mind at all to that former choice establishment of his. He was indifferent to all of those sinful pursuits that once bore such an appeal to Old Joe. Old Joe was indifferent to those worldly sins in death because he was indifferent to God in life. The Door had closed for Old Joe!

3. The end of trial and sorrow to the godly is at hand. Let us suppose that the aging old minister that once had appealed to Old Joe's conscience to turn from his wicked ways passed from this life the same day of Old Joe's demise. How different was the last breath of both? Old Joe knew that the end of all things had come for him. in abject sorrow and despondency, he breathed that last breath and was buried. But the old minister simply closed his eyes in a much deserved sleep and opened them to the smiling face of his Lord. Which outcome would you prefer, friend? Love will be the seal of righteousness if none can offer a perfect righteousness - a love sealed in Christ. " *And above all things have fervent charity among yourselves: for charity shall cover the multitude of sins. Use hospitality one to another without grudging.*"

4. The end of our privileges and opportunities is at hand. Believe me, there are no privileges in Hell! There is no hope of amendment in Hell. All of the occupants are thieves, liars, hypocrites, abusers of themselves with men, perverts and sodomizers of little children, and sorcerers (druggies). No privileges or opportunities are necessary on the blissful far shores of Jordan Banks. There will be not want, but only joyful fellowship and love. " *As every man hath received the gift, even so minister the same one to another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God.*"

5. The end of our probation is at hand. It is true that every knee shall bow at the mighty appearance of the Armies of Heaven with the Heavens as their line of battle. The wicked and evil of the world will acknowledge Him as Lord in sheer fear and dread anticipation of that fiery judgment to come upon them.

In view of these great things coming upon the world, how shall the righteous deport themselves? " *If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God; if any man minister, let him do it as of the ability which God giveth: that God in all things may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom be praise and dominion for ever and ever. Amen*"

## **II. The Important Considerations Founded On This Truth.**

" *Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour.* (1 Peter 5:8)

1. Be sober. If the first thought that comes to your mind is that we must be sober from alcohol, you need to elevate your thinking above this consideration only. Though being free of the debilitating and mind altering use of much alcohol is certainly meant here, much more is also addressed. the second definition of 'sober' is "marked by sedate or gravely or earnestly thoughtful character or demeanor." We must be serious and solemn concerning our responsibilities to both God and our fellows. We cannot be serious about our faith if we are not serious and sober Bible scholars. We must feed from the Bread of Life Daily (God's Word) or else be malnourished Christians.

2. Be watchful. We are each watchmen and watchwomen on the wall. Because we know God's country, we recognize the approach of the enemy on the distant horizon in time to warn those within the walls of the coming danger. Though we may be as a Voice Crying in the Wilderness, it is important to expound truth. In that way, the blood

of the silent will not be on our heads. The story is told of the Duke of Wellington just before the decisive Battle of Waterloo. Seeing an officer slouching with his uniform in disarray, the Duke asked, "Why do you stand in such an unmilitary and unbecoming posture?" to which the officer replied, "I'm off duty, sir." Then the Duke bellowed, "A British officer is never off duty. Resume your military bearing!" Neither is the Christian ever "off duty." We must watch ALWAYS for a watchmen caught sleeping on duty is deserving of facing the firing squad. "*Watch ye therefore, and pray always, that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of man.*" (Luke 21:36)

3. Be prayerful. Three principles for a military unit on the battlefield are MOVE, SHOOT, and COMMUNICATE! We, as soldiers of Christ, must GO (move) into all the world and teach (shoot) the Gospel to all comers. But we must also COMMUNICATE with each other (worshipful fellowship) and to the Field Commander to whom we answer (Jesus Christ). That COMMUNICATION occurs by way of prayer. The field lines must be open in BOTH direction. Prayer is not intended to serve as a conduit whereby we communicate our needs and wants to God, but is more importantly intended to serve as an avenue whereby we gain His will for us - accepting that will as the perfect solution to our appeal.

### **The Grave Duty of Ministers**

*If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God; if any man minister, let him do it as of the ability which God giveth: that God in all things may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom be praise and dominion for ever and ever. Amen* How many times have you heard a minister boast of how many souls he has brought to the Lord? How many have boasted of the massive churches they have built, or the great numbers that have been brought by them into the church? So did the Holy Ghost, bearing the Sword of the Word, have no part in this success, or was it solely attributable to the efforts of human will? If so, those souls are still lost, and that minister better find some fire-retardant garments quickly! All of our preaching and sharing must be done according to the oracles of God, and with every ounce of our ability and talents with which the Lord has endowed us. The end of all must be for the glorification of God. For this reason, the Anglican pulpit is positioned - not at the center of the church sanctuary - but to the right side (Gospel side) facing out; because it is His Word (Gospel) being preached, and it is the Lord Jesus Christ - not man - who is the central focus of our worship. *For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them.* (Matt 18:20)