

Loving is Serving, Serving is Loving – More Than a Building

1 Peter 4:7-11

Main Idea

With the end in mind, the church is to love and serve one another to the Glory of God.

3 Exhortations from this Passage...

The Church is to live in light of Jesus returning

- How do we do this?
 - We understand that we're also "pilgrims" or "elect exiles"(ESV)
 - We take sin seriously
 - Luke 21:34-36: ³⁴ "But take heed to yourselves, lest your hearts be weighed down with ^[a]carousing, drunkenness, and cares of this life, and that Day come on you unexpectedly. ³⁵ For it will come as a snare on all those who dwell on the face of the whole earth. ³⁶ Watch therefore, and pray always that you may ^[b]be counted worthy to escape all these things that will come to pass, and to stand before the Son of Man."
 - The doctrine of the imminent return of Christ should not turn the Christian into a zealous fanatic who does nothing but wait for it to occur. Instead, it should lead the believer into a watchful pursuit of holiness. Moreover, a watchful attitude creates a pilgrim mentality. It reminds the Christian that he is a citizen of heaven only sojourning on earth. – John MacArthur
 - We live with a sense of urgency
 - "Living in confidence and anticipation of the consummation of God's work in Christ" – Eschatological hope
- Peter offered this instruction out of experience
 - Matthew 26:40-41: ⁴⁰ Then He came to the disciples and found them sleeping, and said to Peter, "What! Could you not watch with Me one hour? ⁴¹ Watch and pray, lest you enter into temptation. The spirit indeed *is* willing, but the flesh *is* weak."

The Church is to display love and hospitality toward one another

1. The church is to work at loving one another
 - a. Fervent means "to stretch or strain"
 - b. Takes more work as stress rises (persecution in their case)
 - c. Love leads to forgiving minor issues
 - i. Avoiding major rifts
2. The church is to open their lives and homes to one another
 - d. Hospitality is foundational to the Christian movement
 - i. The twelve disciples were instructed to find hospitable places to stay (Matt 10)
 - ii. Place of hospitality found for The Last Supper
 - iii. Even the early church's practice of celebrating The Last Supper together was rooted in Jesus eating regularly with his disciples
 - e. "One another" may or may not be somebody you know

- Colossians 3:14: ¹⁴ But above all these things put on love, which is the bond of perfection.
- 1 Peter 1:22: ²² Since you have purified your souls in obeying the truth ^[a]through the Spirit in ^[b]sincere love of the brethren, love one another fervently with a pure heart,
- John 13:34-35: ³⁴ A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; as I have loved you, that you also love one another. ³⁵ By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another.”

The Church is equipped and empowered to serve one another

- Romans 12:4-8: ⁴ For as we have many members in one body, but all the members do not have the same function, ⁵ so we, *being* many, are one body in Christ, and individually members of one another. ⁶ Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us, *let us use them*: if prophecy, *let us prophesy* in proportion to our faith; ⁷ or ministry, *let us use it in our* ministering; he who teaches, in teaching; ⁸ he who exhorts, in exhortation; he who gives, with liberality; he who leads, with diligence; he who shows mercy, with cheerfulness.
 - Spiritual Gifts Definition: Ministries or abilities that the Holy Spirit gives to Christians for the edification of the Church – Lexham Bible Dictionary
 - This passage divides them into 2 categories: Speaking & Serving
 - Not a deep dive or all inclusive
 - Discussion of gifts in detail is primarily Paul’s writings – Rom 12; 1 Cor. 12-14
1. God is the giver of the gift(s); we are the recipients
 - We don’t deserve them – God’s grace evidenced in our lives
 - “Charisma” is generally translated “gift”. But because it is likely derived from “charis”, which means “grace”, the term may be better translated “concrete expression of grace” or “gracious bestowment” (Fee, Empowering Presence, 33; Berding, “Confusing Word and Concept,” 44).
 2. The gifts are to be stewarded and not hoarded
 - God channels His grace through us to others by the use of His gifts
 - Less about what your gift(s) is and more about how you’re stewarding it
 3. The gifts are intended to build up the Body
 - Our gifts are a further expression of love toward one another
 4. We can help one another discover and steward their gifts
 - Goes beyond an assessment or survey

The ultimate purpose of our love, hospitality, and service is the Glory of God

- Matthew 5:16: ¹⁶ Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven.
- “Serving fellow Christians does glorify God because people will praise him for his grace that comes to them through Jesus and through his followers.” – Expositor’s Bible Commentary