

Hopewell ARP Prayer Meeting, Wednesday, August 12, 2020
Devotional on 1Peter 4:7

But the end of all things is at hand; therefore be serious and watchful in your prayers.

“The end of all things is at hand.”

This was especially true for the persecutors of the churches to whom the apostle was particularly writing, as Jerusalem and the temple were about to suffer an apocalyptic-level destruction.

But it is also perpetually true for the persecutors of the church in every age. They may seem to be prospering, just as the evil man whom Asaph envied in Psalm 73.

But what did that holy man see when he went to the worship of God? “Until I went into the sanctuary of God; then, I understood their end. Surely You set them in slippery places; You cast them down to destruction. Oh, how they are brought to desolation, as in a moment!” (Ps 73:17–19a).

But he also saw his own end. “Nevertheless I am continually with You; You hold me by my right hand. You will guide me with Your counsel, and afterward receive me to glory. Whom have I in heaven but You? And there is none upon earth that I desire besides You. My flesh and my heart fail; but God is the strength of my heart and my portion forever” (Ps 73:23–26).

So it is with the unpredictable end of our persecutors, and of our own selves, and even of this entire age. When we see that the end of all things is at hand, it deflates our envy or fear of the wicked. It reorients our values away from where thieves break in and steal, and where moth and rust destroys. Thus the apostle says, **“Therefore, be serious.”**

But it also does something else. It moves us to pray.

“Be serious and watchful in your prayers.”

Whenever a believer learns from Scripture about God’s intent to do something, he is to pray according to that Scripture. This is what it means to pray according to the will of God, that is to say, “to pray according to *the Word* of God.” It is one of the habits of believers to be meditating upon God’s Word and to be continually turning that meditation over to prayer, “Yes, Lord, give what You have willed!”

So, we are to be praying for an end to persecution, for we know that the Lord intends this.

And, we are to be praying for our own perfection in holiness, for we know that the Lord intends this.

And, we are to be praying for our own passing into glory, for we know that the Lord intends this.

And, we are to be praying for the return of the Lord Jesus Christ, for we know that the Lord intends this.

And, we are continually to be serving the Lord, His people, and our neighbors in the manner that we would like to be caught serving upon the return of the Master. We mustn’t give the lie to our prayers by becoming passive and lazy. Rather, “be serious and watchful” in your prayers,

“And above all things have fervent love for one another, for “love will cover a multitude of sins.” Be hospitable to one another without grumbling. As each one has received a gift, minister it to one another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God. If anyone speaks, let him speak as the oracles of God. If anyone ministers, let him do it as with the ability which God supplies, that in all things God may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom belong the glory and the dominion forever and ever. Amen” (vv8–11)