

September 26

Scriptures: Read 1 Peter 4

Key Verse: “The end of all things is near. Therefore be clear minded and self-controlled so that you can pray. Above all, love each other deeply, because love covers over a multitude of sins” (1 Peter 4:7,8) (NIV).

Overview

The New Testament writers were all conscious of the “end of all things”. They expected the culmination of human history to be at hand. And, in the light of the soon return of Christ, there was an urgency about the early believers’ choices and values. They lived as though Jesus were at the door.

This is the context of the key verse — “The end of all things is near.” With that in mind, Peter encourages his readers to do three things: 1. Be clear minded, 2. Be self-controlled, and 3. Love each other deeply. Keep your brain in gear. Keep your morality pure. Keep your relationships strong. Practical, good advice.

Clear-mindedness means good thinking, focused thinking, and godly thinking. We all know how easy it is to let our minds be filled with all kinds of unhealthy stuff. Covetousness, adultery, dishonesty, and most other sinful behaviour starts with what you think about. You are what you think. And if you’re not yet, you will soon be. Solomon said, “As he thinks in his heart, so is he” (Prov. 23:7).

Self-control has a lot to do with keeping a clear head. A man who fathers a child extra-maritally had the capability (I assume) to think through the possible consequences of it all back when he was fantasizing, long before he acted. We think, we choose, we act. Our morality reflects our thinking.

As we think clearly and act morally, we will be able to love deeply. God wants us to seek the good of our neighbour — to see him/her as a person, not an object. We’ll avoid a lot of sin that way.

Prayer

Lord, give us a genuine and pure love for people which edifies them and creates in them a thirst for You. May our lives be an example of Your compassion for the lost.