

Living for God in the Last Days
1 Peter 4:1-7

- I. We know from Scripture that the **true church** is going to be raptured before God brings upon the world his judgment and wrath against Satan, his minions, and those who refuse to believe the gospel through what is known as the seven year tribulation period. The rapture is imminent and could occur at any moment. In fact, there is nothing that needs to occur in prophetic fulfillment before the rapture takes place. That is what Peter means when he says that the *end of all things is near*. It is what Jesus refers to when he tells us to *be watchful*. It is why the writer of Hebrews admonishes us by saying, *don't forsake the assembling of yourselves together as you see the Day approaching*. Therefore, we are to keep awake, be sober, be ready, and encourage one another as we wait to be called up into the clouds to meet the Lord in the air to be with him forever.

1 Thess. 5:9-10

1 Thess. 5:2-6

Matthew 24:42-45

1 Thess. 4:14-18

2 Peter 3:10-13 *But the day of the Lord will come like a thief. The heavens will disappear with a roar; the elements will be destroyed by fire, and the earth and everything done in it will be laid bare. Since everything will be destroyed in this way, what kind of people ought you to be? You ought to live holy and godly lives 12 as you look forward to the day of God and speed its coming. That day will bring about the destruction of the heavens by fire, and the elements will melt in the heat. 13 But in keeping with his promise we are looking forward to a new heaven and a new earth, where righteousness dwells.*

- II. To be clear minded and self-controlled as we wait for the Lord's coming can only occur through righteous living. To be done with sin is not a suggestion to be pondered, or a proposal to be mulled over for further consideration. It is not something that we approach halfheartedly or with lack of conviction. It is a command that requires our obedience so that we can keep ourselves alert and ready to be called up into the clouds to be with Him. The Lord put the tension of the imminency of His return in the Scriptures for a reason, it is meant to keep us Christ centered in how we think and act while living in this depraved world.

1 Peter 4:1-6

Matt. 16:24

1 Peter 3:18

1 Peter 2:24

1 Peter 2:11

Matt. 5:29-30

James 3:17

Matt. 16:24-27 *24 Then Jesus said to his disciples, "Whoever wants to be my disciple must deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me. 25 For whoever wants to save their life will lose it, but whoever loses their life for me will find it. 26 What good will it be for someone to gain the whole world, yet forfeit their soul? Or what can anyone give in exchange for their soul? 27 For the Son of Man is going to come in his Father's glory with his angels, and then he will reward each person according to what they have done.*

- III. To be clear minded and self-controlled enables us to approach the throne of grace with confidence to receive grace and mercy in our time of need. It is vital that we don't mess up our minds with shame and guilt over sin so that we can freely come to God to ask for strength, wisdom and his will to be done in the difficulty of the times we are living in.

1 Peter 4:7

Heb. 4:15-16

Heb. 12:1-2 *Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles. And let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us, 2 fixing our eyes on Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of faith.*