

INTRODUCTION:

True disciples of Christ ABIDE, CONNECT, SHARE. We've discussed for the last several weeks that this is what we must do as disciples of Christ, and there is not an option to not do these things. We've also been learning *how* we ABIDE, CONNECT, and SHARE, which is our 5 Gs (God Time, Gather Time, Group Time, Give Time, and Go Time). We've previously noted that in order to ABIDE, we must have God Time, which should be our first and best. I hope that you've been taking your God Time seriously. Next, we saw that we need Gather Time, which is our time of Corporate (body of Christ) worship, where we gather together to exalt Christ, pray together, observe ordinances together, fellowship and be strengthened together, and encounter the Lord together. Then we discussed the importance of Group Time, where we interact more closely with other believers and are held accountable. Today, we address our fourth G which is Give Time, which we will look at from 1 Peter 4:7-11.

MAIN TEXT (1 Peter 4:7-11)

BACKGROUND

1 Peter was written by the Apostle, to "the temporary residents dispersed in Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia." Scholars believe that it was likely written sometime after Paul was martyred in 63 AD. Things were not good for Christians in the Roman Empire at the time. According to A. R. Faussett, "HIS OBJECT seems to be, by the prospect of their heavenly portion and by Christ's example, to afford consolation to the persecuted, and prepare them for a greater approaching ordeal, and to exhort all, husbands, wives, servants, presbyters, and people, to a due discharge of relative duties, so as to give no handle to the enemy to reproach Christianity, but rather to win them to it, and so to establish them in "the true grace of God

wherein they stand.” Today, from Peter’s letter, we will see that WE GIVE OURSELVES TO PRAYER, WE GIVE OURSELVES WITH LOVE, WE MUST STEWARD GOD’S GRACE, and WE GIVE OURSELVES FOR HIS GLORY.

PASSAGE OUTLINE:

1. WE GIVE OURSELVES TO PRAYER (4:7) Now the end of all things is near; therefore, be serious and disciplined for prayer.
 - a. To be serious and disciplined (be sober and watch, KJV) requires intentional effort.
 - b. We know that the end is near. We are told that the Day of the Lord will come like a thief in the night. As we near that day, we must be devoted to prayer.
 - c. Wait, wasn’t prayer a part of our God Time?
 - i. Yes.
 - ii. Prayer is a part of each of the Gs in the life of a disciple.
 - d. Prayer is non-negotiable. It is an act of devotion to the Lord. Time in prayer is time given to Him!
 - e. We’ve been reminded over and over again in scripture that this world is coming to an end. Why would we allow ourselves to be distracted by this world when it is temporary?
 - f. We not only give ourselves to prayer, but we also give ourselves with love.
2. WE GIVE OURSELVES WITH LOVE (4:8-9) Above all, maintain an intense love for each other, since love covers a multitude of sins. Be hospitable to one another without complaining.
 - a. Giving ourselves with love requires giving sacrificially. (2 Sam 24) When David went to make a sacrifice to the Lord, Araunah offered to give him everything that he needed to make the sacrifice, but David insisted on paying for it. “I will not offer

to the Lord my God burnt offerings that cost me nothing.”

- i. True giving is of what you have and must cost.
- b. (Rom 12:1-8) Therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God, I urge you to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God; this is your spiritual worship. Do not be conformed to this age, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, so that you may discern what is the good, pleasing, and perfect will of God. For by the grace given to me, I tell everyone among you not to think of himself more highly than he should think. Instead, think sensibly, as God has distributed a measure of faith to each one. Now as we have many parts in one body, and all the parts do not have the same function, in the same way we who are many are one body in Christ and individually members of one another. According to the grace given to us, we have different gifts: If prophecy, use it according to the standard of one’s faith; if service, in service; if teaching, in teaching; if exhorting, in exhortation; giving, with generosity; leading, with diligence; showing mercy, with cheerfulness.
- c. Giving ourselves with love requires the love that covers a multitude of sins.
 - i. This is NOT ignoring sins, or condoning sins.
 - ii. It is forgiveness and restoration.
 - iii. *agápē* – properly, *love* which centers in moral *preference*.
 - iv. This grace is not just for people that we like. Who is God calling you to demonstrate that kind of love to today?
- d. Be hospitable without complaining.
 - i. When people travelled in those days, they couldn’t just stay at Motel 6. They had to

rely on hospitality. And you didn't come to town for just a couple of days, because travel was hard. Hospitality was and is essential to Middle Eastern culture.

- ii. All of our visitors bring us joy. Some when they arrive, others when they leave.
 - e. We are to have a love for each other that causes us to prefer, forgive, host, and enjoy our fellow believers. This is not something we can outsource.
3. WE MUST STEWARD GOD'S GRACE.
- a. Every believer has at least one gift that God has given to him/her.
 - i. You may have more, but you have at least one. If you don't know what it is, start doing something. It will become apparent to you.
 - b. Our gifts are to be used to serve one another. (Remember the 59 "one anothers").
 - c. We are called to steward (manage) our gifts.
 - i. (Matt 25:14-30) The Parable of the talents.
 - d. We use our gifts in the strength of God.
 - i. Remember when we talked about the vine and the branches.
 - ii. The strength that we need to give fully of ourselves can only come from God.
 - e. Some questions:
 - i. What have you done with the gifts that God has given you?
 - ii. Who have you helped along the way?
 - iii. Is our church better and stronger because you are here?
 - iv. Are you wasting your gift or are you using it for God's glory?
 - f. Not only must we give ourselves to prayer, and give ourselves in love, and be good stewards of God's

gifts to us, but we must also give ourselves for His glory.

4. WE GIVE OURSELVES FOR HIS GLORY (4:11) If anyone speaks, it should be as one who speaks God's words; if anyone serves, it should be from the strength God provides, so that God may be glorified through Jesus Christ in everything. To Him belong the glory and the power forever and ever. Amen.
 - a. We are called to speak God's words, not only to other believers, but to those who need to hear the gospel. We've gotten great at outsourcing missions. We need to reclaim our mission here!
 - b. We are also called to serve.
 - c. The reason for all of this is to point to the glory of God through Jesus Christ whom we serve.
 - d. Everything we say and do must be for and about Him.

CONCLUSION:

Living your life as a disciple requires discipline and a focus on Christ. We must continually abide in Him and He in us. We must gather together to worship Him in Spirit and in Truth. We must group together to learn and share and be held accountable. We must give sacrificially, not only of our finances, but of whatever God has given us. Has He given you money to use for His kingdom? Use it for His kingdom. Has He given you time? Use your time. Has He given you some other resource to use for Him? Has he given you a talent, an ability, or a knack for something that can be used for His kingdom? Use it. The call of a disciple is to deny yourself, take up your cross and follow Him. Are you ready to do that today?