

# PREPARED TO LIVE IN VICTORY: WE NEED TO PRAY AND LOVE EACH OTHER

Houses of Light Church • October 29-30, 2022 • Pastor Netz Gómez

## 1 Pet. 4:8

***“Above all, keep loving one another earnestly, since love covers a multitude of sins.”***

### I. QUICK REVIEW

- A. Last week we saw how Scripture describes the structure of history primarily in two ages, the present and the age to come (1 Pet. 4:7). We as a generation have had the privilege of living between the first and second coming of Christ and we are living in the last days of the end times (Matt. 24). According to biblical truth we do not believe in the end of the world but we do believe in the end of the age.
- B. These are days of the mysterious arrival of the kingdom of heaven (Lk. 17:20-21). The Messiah has already come and brought with Him the kingdom of God, furthermore the kingdom comes in the present and will come fully when Jesus returns. As a church we are awaiting the second coming of Christ with a sense of urgency and joy..

### II. WHAT IS THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN PRAYER AND THE END OF ALL THINGS?

**1 Pet. 4:7b “therefore be self-controlled and sober-minded for the sake of your prayers.”**

- A. What makes this time we live in require prayer so urgent? The connection between the approaching end of all things and the need for prayer is crucial.

**1 Pet. 4:17-18 “For it is time for judgment to begin at the household of God; and if it begins with us, what will be the outcome for those who do not obey the gospel of God?”<sup>18</sup> And “If the righteous is scarcely saved, what will become of the ungodly and the sinner?”**

- B. The point of these verses is to say that we live in a time of great crisis, of urgency, because the first coming of Christ has already initiated the judgment in this age **and begins with us as a church not as a punishment but to purify us**, as he said Peter at the beginning of the letter:

**1 Pet. 1:7 “so that the tested genuineness of your faith—more precious than gold that perishes though it is tested by fire—may be found to result in praise and glory and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ.”**

- C. The judgment of God in these last days is directed at the family of God, towards us, the righteous; not to condemn or destroy us but to purify us and for those who have not purified themselves it will become a judgment of punishment. So prayer is essential because the end of all things is near and it is a very urgent, critical, dangerous and difficult time as Paul says:

**2 Tim. 3:1 “But understand this, that in the last days there will come times of difficulty.”**

- D. Life in this age is always under siege; there is war against our soul and against our faith; **but as the end of the end times approaches, it will become much more difficult and Peter knows it and that is why he keeps saying: "pray."** Let's see how prayer works in that context of the end times.

**Lk. 21:36** *"[Since the return of the Lord is drawing near] ...stay awake at all times, praying that you may have strength to escape all these things [the dynamics of the end times] that are going to take place, and to stand before the Son of Man.."*

- E. **We must pray for strength (Eph. 3:16; Col. 1:11),** because it will take being strengthened in order not to be ruined, absorbed and destroyed but rather to escape the spiritual destruction of things to come. Jesus put it in his own battle in Gethsemane and used it to apply it to us so that we would not be overwhelmed and destroyed by temptation.

**Mar. 14:38** *"Watch and pray that you may not enter into temptation. The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak."*

- F. **That is why it is essential to pray and cry out to God to receive all the help we need.** The Holy Spirit included in this exhortation from Peter to be sober because of what we need to pray for. There is a mentality that prays and another mentality that thinks that prayer is useless and **Peter is appealing to us to see the reality of the world around us and have a mentality that leads us to have a consistent and deep prayer life.**
- G. **"Be self-controlled and sober-minded"** Having self-control is not being carried away by impulses but rather reflecting on the nature of the reality that is in front of us and leading ourselves in a controlled way that aligns with the reality of what God He says. **We must be guided by a correct assessment of what is really going on.**
- H. The opposite of being sober is being drunk; when someone is drunk they don't see things as they really are, they can't speak well, they can't drive because they're dizzy, they're not in their five senses. **Do not have a mind that cannot think well, act well, or pray well.** See what is happening as really so that you pray effectively because your mind is in touch with the reality of who God is and what He says.

### III. ONLY LOVE CAN COVER MANY SINS

**1 Pet. 4:8** *"Above all, keep loving one another earnestly, since love covers a multitude of sins."*

- A. How is it that love for God and more specifically for other Christians is crucial, as the end times draw near? Why is there such a great need to love one another as the end of everything draws near? What kinds of things is the end of the age going to bring that is going to require loving one another with a special emphasis? There are at least two risks in the face of end times:
1. **Stress in relationships:** Whenever there is a crisis in life, in a marriage, the relationship is more difficult. For example, if a baby is born with a disability,

this increases the stress in the family. If one of the members of the couple falls ill, this increases stress; if there is conflict at work that increases the stress in the marriage. So we can imagine the kind of dangers that come at the end of the age among Christians.

2. **Faith is threatened:** Faced with the pressure that comes, people will be tempted to move away from the faith, which is called apostasy. (**2 Thes. 2:3 y 1 Tim. 4:1**).

B. How does loving one another help us in times like these? We must continue loving each other even though recent times bring different pressures and to know what love is we must remember what the Scripture says:

**1 Cor. 13:4-13** *"Love is patient and kind; love does not envy or boast; it is not arrogant or rude. It does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful; [love covers a multitude of sins]... <sup>7</sup> Love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things.... <sup>13</sup> So now faith, hope, and love abide, these three; but the greatest of these is love."*

C. For that reason Peter says: *"above all love each other"* because true love will be needed in a special way at the end of the age because of the pressures that come in relationships and this reality requires a love in which we support each other.

**Col. 3:12-13** *"Put on then, as God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, compassionate hearts, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience, <sup>13</sup> bearing with one another and, if one has a complaint against another, forgiving each other; as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive."*

D. This is part of what the Holy Spirit means by the phrase, *"love covers a multitude of sins"* (1 Pet. 4:8b). This is key for marriage, the church, for all relationships; either there is a real grievance and you both repent and forgive each other, or there are tensions and someone doesn't recognize the need to ask for forgiveness and they keep doing the same thing and it offends you then you have to put up with it, that is, cover up their sin and not respond in kind. anger and not let it ruin the relationship. This is how love acts in the aspect of stress in relationships.

E. Concerning the threat against faith we have this exhortation.

**Jas. 5:19-20** *"My brothers, if anyone among you wanders from the truth and someone brings him back, <sup>20</sup> let him know that whoever brings back a sinner from his wandering will save his soul from death and will cover a multitude of sins."*

F. **James speaks of the one who deviates from the truth,** it is very possible that in the intensity of the pressures of the end of the age, it will happen that when the followers of Christ have their heads cut off, or are put in prison or wanted take away their children some stray from the faith. We are called to go after those who went astray to make them return to Christ and when we do so we cover a multitude of sins because the Father forgives them and in that

sense we save a soul. That is why loving one another is especially urgent in recent times.

- G. When he says "**above all**" it is not something absolute but in this context it highlights the importance of love; **it is talking about your response when you see the sins of others and how you handle your heart.** When the text says "**dearly**" it means that Christians need to be sincere and really loving, not superficial or trivial. **We Christians must distinguish ourselves by our love for people.** It is difficult to be authentic in our love for people, may God fill us with that endearing love for each other.

#### IV. REFLECTION QUESTIONS

1. Do you consider that in your prayer life you are receiving the strength you need to be victorious in the challenges you are facing? Explain.
2. What kind of stress are you having in your relationships with others and how are you loving those around you?
3. What does Peter mean by the phrase "*love will cover a multitude of sins*" and how are you putting it into practice?

#### THIS WEEK'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

1. Our family event Hallelujah Night! It's already this Monday, October 31 from 4:00 p.m. There will be food, games, an evangelistic concert and candy
2. Corporate Prayer this Thursday at 7:00 p.m..

THE WHOLE FAMILY IS WELCOME!