

**Living Hope: 1 Peter 4:1-11**  
**The Christian's New Reality and the Call to Show Up**  
by Pastor Colton Conrad

**1) It's time to live for the will of God.**

Therefore, since Christ suffered in his body, arm yourselves also with the same attitude, because whoever suffers in the body is done with sin. <sup>2</sup>As a result, they do not live the rest of their earthly lives for evil human desires, but *rather for the will of God*. <sup>3</sup>For you have spent enough time in the past doing what pagans choose to do—living in debauchery, lust, drunkenness, orgies, carousing and detestable idolatry. <sup>4</sup>They are surprised that you do not join them in their reckless, wild living, and they heap abuse on you. <sup>5</sup>But they will have to give account to him who is ready to judge the living and the dead. <sup>6</sup>For this is the reason the gospel was preached even to those who are now dead, so that they might be judged according to human standards in regard to the body, but *live according to God in regard to the spirit*. (1 Peter 4:1-6).

The will of God is a vision of ultimate reality that we either accept or reject. Whose will, will we live for?

The Christian's New Reality has consequences and implications, and a call.

**A) Arm Yourselves with the same Attitude**

Arm = ready yourselves

**B) Attitude: a pattern of thinking, acting, and feeling.**

The attitude that Christ had:

“Father, if you are willing, take this cup from me; yet not my will, but yours be done.” (Luke 22:42)

“...because whoever suffers in the body is done with sin”:  
May refer to believers dealing away with sin because by suffering they face a choice – either take the path of least resistance by going along with the values norms and practices that are seen as acceptable to society or obey God and suffer the consequences of criticism and condemnation by unbelieving friends.

– Karen Jobes

**C) Living in Ultimate Reality, or in a daze of Dopamine**  
(v. 3-4)

“Supernormal stimuli are a driving force in many of today's problems, including obesity, addiction to television and video games, and war...People sit alone in front of a plastic box streaming *Friends* instead of going out with their real buddies. They tend Farmville crops while shirking their real duties. Men have sex with two-dimensional screen images when a willing partner may be in the next room.”

– Dierdre Barrett

“Few people would say this is really how they want to live. But this is where we are. Real life, with its real risks and slower rhythms, struggles to compete with the short-term payoff we can get from pixels.”

– Brant Hansen

“...reducing our lives to meaninglessness is the goal of our spiritual enemy. God loads meaning into the world, and the enemy wants to deconstruct it... We're addicted to the dopamine hit we can get from supernormal stimuli, but here's

the reason it's an unending treadmill: The dopamine never gives us what we're really looking for."

– Brant Hansen

"Lust is the craving for salt of a man who is dying of thirst."

– Frederick Buechner

Where are we, then? Are we in reality, or living mostly for the dopamine hit of our modern world?

#### **D) There will be a reckoning.**

We are all going to come face to face with that reality. Everyone is. That reckoning is "a wholesome stimulus to faithfulness."

– John Stott

#### **2) The End is Near, so be sane. (v. 7)**

<sup>7</sup> The end of all things is near. Therefore, be alert and of sober mind so that you may pray. <sup>8</sup> Above all, love each other deeply, because love covers over a multitude of sins. <sup>9</sup> Offer hospitality to one another without grumbling.

"The end is near."

The End of all things is near, therefore (in light of that) – be alert and of sober mind. Another way to translate that is "be in your right mind" – be sane!

So, believing that the end is near is not crazy, in fact this text tells us, really twice, that to live as though the end of all things

is near is sane, and to live like there won't be a reckoning, *is crazy!*

But you might ask, didn't Peter write this close to 2000 yrs ago...So, is the end really near?

Yes. Around 20% of what Jesus said had to do with His coming at the end:

"But watch yourselves lest your hearts be weighed down with dissipation and drunkenness and cares of this life, and that day come upon you suddenly like a trap. For it will come upon all who dwell on the face of the whole earth. But stay awake at all times, praying that you may have strength to escape all these things that are going to take place, and to stand before the Son of Man." (Luke 21:34-36)

"Therefore, you also must be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect." (Matthew 24:44)

Matthew 25 – Parable of the Ten Virgins (and their lamps!)

"Contra Marx, it turns out that heaven is not the opiate of the people, lulling them into indifference to present injustices, but a potent stimulant to work for the good of others, denying oneself and, in the process, communicating God's goodness and displaying God's coming kingdom."

– Kevin Vanhoozer

#### **3) Show Up in Real Life and Serve with what God has Given You. (v. 8-11):**

## A) Love and Forgive

<sup>8</sup> Above all, love each other deeply, because love covers over a multitude of sins.

Love one another *deeply*. “constant” “stretched or extended.”

## B) Open Your Life Up to Others

<sup>9</sup> Offer hospitality to one another without grumbling.

“Offer”– don’t wait to be asked for it – Offer hospitality. *Show up, see a need, and offer hospitality without grumbling!*

“Do not forget to show hospitality to *strangers*, for by so doing some people have shown hospitality to angels without knowing it. (Heb. 13:2)

Jesus says, “Anyone who welcomes you welcomes me, and anyone who welcomes me welcomes the one who sent me.” (Matt. 10:40)

***“The measure of our openness to others reveals our intimacy with the one who said, “Come to Me”.”*** (Doug Webster)

## C) Use Your Gifts to Serve

<sup>10</sup> Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others, as faithful stewards of God’s grace in its various forms. <sup>11</sup> If anyone speaks, they should do so as one who speaks the very words of God. If anyone serves, they should do so with the strength God provides, so that in all things God may be praised through Jesus Christ. To him be the glory and the power for ever and ever. Amen.

The Tragedy of “*hikikomori*”: People who haven’t participated in society or shown a desire to for at least a year.

“The hurting world and hurting communities need us to solve real-world problems, protect real-world people, and fight real-world injustice. Actually...the hurting world and *your* hurting community need *you* to solve real-world problems, protect real-world people, and fight real-world injustice. Please, don’t waste your God-given desire for adventure and accomplishment by being a fake hero fighting fake injustices in fake worlds. Join me in reality.”

– Brant Hansen

“The real secret to an unsatisfied life lies too often in an unsundered will.”

– Hudson Taylor

God equips us with gifts to show up with.

“It is the love of God that brings us to our brother’s [and sisters] feet; it is the grace of God that fills our basin for service.”

– Ed Clowney

The Parable of the Talents (Matthew 25:14-28)

You won’t gain the answer to how God has gifted you by introspection or by staying in your room, and you won’t live according to God’s will and share in your master’s happiness if you do that. Come and serve.

<sup>11</sup> If anyone speaks, they should do so as one who speaks the very words of God. If anyone serves, they should do so with

the strength God provides, so that in all things God may be praised through Jesus Christ. To him be the glory and the power for ever and ever. Amen.

Show up trusting in God's Strength, so that God might be praised.

### **Conclusion:**

Peter ends by giving us the result of our living for God's will. *Why should we be people who live for the will of God, with the end in mind, with alertness, love, and great service?* So that in all things God may be praised through Jesus Christ to Him be the glory and the power forever and ever. Amen.

Will we hear, "Well done, good and faithful servant! You have been faithful with a few things; I will put you in charge of many things. Come and share your master's happiness!" (Matt 25:21)?

Let's turn away from living for the dopamine hits of our modern world. The End is near, and God has given us great gifts to pour into the reality of our hurting world with. Will you show up?

Where is God calling you to show up? What are those gifts – the varied gifts of God's grace, that He has equipped you with to serve His people?

### **SMALL GROUP QUESTIONS**

1. Read **1 Peter 4:1-6**. Peter calls us to "arm ourselves" with Jesus' attitude – His pattern of thinking, feeling, and acting. Explore that for a moment. In the midst of suffering and

accusations, how did He act? (*See the trial of Jesus in the gospels for a good look! (Matthew 26-27; Mark 14-15; John 18-19; Luke 22-23)*)

2. In what ways have you experienced people being surprised for what you won't do? In what ways has this, presented opportunities for the gospel to be made known? In what ways do people malign believers for not participating in these things? (*Consider looking into how believers experience in other countries in the world for a fuller picture*)

3. In light of the whole of 1 Peter 4:1-11, how are you pursuing the will of God? In what ways might you be pursuing your own will?

4. Do you live, functionally, as if the end is near, or not? What does living like Jesus could come back any day – what does that look like? What is one practical change God might be calling you to make in your life?

5. How can you practice hospitality without grumbling in your particular circumstance?

6. What gifts has God given you? What opportunities are there for you to show up with them? If you don't feel like you have many opportunities, how can you start "showing up" and taking a posture that is ready to serve?

7. Write down 2 ways you will show up in your church, neighbourhood, or friend's lives this week. And then do it.