



# The Scrolls

Helping **CENTRAL BIBLE CHURCH** Families Belong, Become and Go Beyond V26 N20 May 19, 2024

## HIGHER UP

“Preparing for the End”

1 Peter 4:7-11

### THIS WEEK'S CORE COMPETENCY

#### Love

I sacrificially and unconditionally love and forgive others.

*“This is love: not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son as an atoning sacrifice for our sins. Dear friends, since God so loved us, we also ought to love one another. No one has ever seen God; but if we love one another, God lives in us, and his love is made complete in us.”*

1 John 4:10-12



The end is imminent—how then should we live?

Consider the following scattered thoughts regarding love. Clearly Jesus’ “new command” given on the night of his betrayal made a lasting impression on his disciples. “My children, I will be with you only a little longer . . . A new command I give you: *Love one another*. By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another” (Jn 13:34-35). The epistles of Peter and of John make this evident. Peter uses the word seven times in his first letter – five with reference to believers loving one another. He tells them to “love the *family* of believers” (2:17) in general, and more specifically, to “love one another deeply” (1:22; cf. 4:8). In his second letter, he makes *love* a capstone virtue. He writes: “Make every effort to add to your faith *goodness*; and to goodness, *knowledge*; and to knowledge, *self-control*; and to self-control, *perseverance*; and to perseverance, *godliness*; and to godliness, *mutual affection*; and to mutual affection, *love*” (1:5-7).

Not to be outdone, John uses the word twenty-seven times in his first epistle. This is quite remarkable given his letter has only five chapters and one hundred and five verses. That’s twenty-one times in each chapter and one time every four verses! While John often refers to God’s love for us or our love for God (e.g., 3:1; 4:9, 10, 11; cf. 2:5, 15; 3:17), the vast majority of times he refers to our love for “one another” (e.g., 3:11, 23; 4:7, 11, 12). The following are among his most poignant statements. “This is how we know what love is: Jesus Christ laid down his life for us. And we ought to lay down our lives for our brothers and sisters. If anyone has material possessions and sees a brother or sister in need but has no pity on them, how can the love of God be in that person? Dear children, let us not love with words or speech but with actions and in truth” (3:16-18); “Dear friends, since God so loved us, we also ought to love one another. No one has ever seen God; but if we love one another, God lives in us, and his love is made complete in us” (4:11-12); and “Whoever claims to love God yet hates a brother or sister is a liar. For whoever does

not love their brother and sister, whom they have seen, cannot love God, whom they have not seen. And he has given us this command: Anyone who loves God must also love their brother and sister” (4:20-21).

The fact that love is commanded and is the mutual responsibility of all Christians suggests something about the virtue, namely, that love is neither simply nor primarily an emotion. As one commentator observes: “Agape love is capable of being commanded because it is not primarily an emotion but a *decision of the will leading to action*” (Edwin A. Blum, “1 Peter,” in *The Expositor’s Bible Commentary*, vol. 12, 246). In that regard, I can *agape* love a complete stranger – consider parable of the Good Samaritan – as well as someone I don’t particularly like – consider Jesus’ command to “love your enemies” (Lk 6:27, 35; cf. Mt 5:43-44).

Peter implies that love is more than a *mere* emotion by linking his command, “love each other deeply” (1Pe 4:7), to his following commands regarding the exercise of various spiritual gifts. He writes: “Offer hospitality to one another without grumbling. Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others as faithful stewards of God’s grace in its various forms” (1Pe 4:9-10). Another commentator makes this link explicit. He writes: “Hospitality is a specific example of loving one another – this time by receiving others into our homes, making them feel welcome, meeting their needs, and providing for them a place of fellowship and acceptance. But Peter knows that people are better at conforming externally than at doing something from the heart. Accordingly, he adds ‘without grumbling.’ Hospitality formed the foundation of the Christian movement” (Scot McKnight, *The NIV Application Commentary: 1 Peter*, 238).

In light of these scattered thoughts regarding the virtue, one might entertain a slight revision in our thinking about the Creed for the Core Competency Love, to wit, “I sacrificially and unconditionally love others *by serving* and forgiving them.”

# 1

## EXAMINE GOD'S WORD

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### Read 1 Peter 4:7-11

7 *The end of all things is near. Therefore be alert and of sober mind so that you may pray.* 8 *Above all, love each other deeply, because love covers over a multitude of sins.* 9 *Offer hospitality to one another without grumbling.* 10 *Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others, as faithful stewards of God's grace in its various forms.* 11 *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.*

### Read in another translation

7 *For the culmination of all things is near. So be self-controlled and sober-minded for the sake of prayer.* 8 *Above all keep your love for one another fervent, because **love covers a multitude of sins.*** 9 *Show hospitality to one another without complaining.* 10 *Just as each one has received a gift, use it to serve one another as good stewards of the varied grace of God.* 11 *Whoever speaks, let it be with God's words. Whoever serves, do so with the strength that God supplies, so that in everything God will be glorified through Jesus Christ. To him belong the glory and the power forever and ever. Amen.*  
(NET)

After reading the text, practice your Observation skills by noting the following:

- Bracket "end of all things" in v. 7.
- Circle "near" in v. 7.
- Box "Therefore" indicating *result* in v. 7.
- Box "so that" indicating *purpose* in vv. 7, 11.
- Circle "deeply" in v. 8.
- Bracket "love covers a multitude of sins" in v. 8.
- Circle "gift" and "grace" in v. 10.
- Circle "various" in v. 10.
- Circle "speaks" in v. 11.
- Box "as" indicating *comparison* in v. 11.
- Circle "serves" in v. 11.
- Circle "him" in v. 11.

Underline "if it is God's will" in v. 17. What one word would you use to describe the **TONE** of this passage? (i.e., stern, joyful, cautious, etc.)

What word or idea stands out to you in this passage?

What one thing do you not understand in this passage?

Try to summarize the **THEME** of this passage in one word. If you were going to describe these verses, you might say, "This text is about \_\_\_\_\_."



## DIG DEEPER

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Answer the questions to help you apply the passage and prepare for discussion

1. To *what* does “the end of all things” refer?
2. *What* makes being “alert and of sober mind” important to prayer? Explain.
3. Explain *why* believers are to “love each other deeply.”
4. Offering hospitality was more important in the first century than the twenty-first century. Explain *why*.
5. Explain *why* Peter added “without grumbling” to his exhortation.
6. To *what* does “gift” (v. 10) refer?
7. The Greek word for “gift” is *charisma* and for “grace” is *charis*. *What* does that imply?
8. Summarize *how speaking* gifts should be exercised.
9. Summarize *how serving* gifts should be exercised.
10. **Discussion:** *What* is your “gift” and *how* do Peter’s instructions regarding the exercise of *spiritual* gifts (v. 10) apply to you?

### Commentary On The Text

In 1 Peter 4:7-11, the apostle describes a Christian ethic grounded in the hope shared by his readers (cf. 3:15)—an *eschatological* ethic to be followed by all believers. One commentator writes: “The hope of Christ’s return is an essential part of the believer’s equipment for fruitful Christian living. In this passage Peter discusses aggressive Christian service in the light of the impending end. The anticipation of the Lord’s return must have an impact on present Christian conduct . . . Peter here asserts that the end is near (v. 7a), he delineates Christian living in view of the end (vv. 7b-11a), and he points to the true goal of all Christian service (v. 11b)” (D. Edmund Hiebert, “Living in the Light of Christ’s Return: An Exposition of 1 Peter 4:7-11,” *Bibliotheca Sacra* 139:555 [July-September 1982]:245).

Peter opens with the statement, “The end of all things is near,” which forms the foundation on which he builds the eschatological ethic described in verses 7b-11a. By “all things” he is not referring to the dissolution of all material things, but rather to the *goal* of all things, namely, the outcome of salvation history. The same author explains: “Here this comprehensive term is best taken as neuter, ‘all things’ depicting the eschatological end. ‘The end’ [to telos], the consummation of the present course of history, implies not merely cessation but also the goal toward which this present age is moving. It is the prophetic message of Christ’s return” (Hiebert, 244). What’s more, Peter makes it clear that this “end” is *near at hand* or *ready to break in* (cf. regarding the first advent, Mt 3:2; 10:7; Mk 1:15; Lk 10:9, 11 and regarding the second advent, Rom 13:12; Heb 10:25; Jas 5:8), suggesting that Christ’s return is *imminent* or *impending*. Put a bit differently, his return is the *penultimate event* in the story of redemption, namely its *resolution*.

What follows in verses 7b-11a are a number of exhortations depicting conduct suited to the times. *First*, he tells his readers to prepare themselves to pray intelligently by being “alert” and by being “of sober mind” (v. 7a). The two terms can be translated in a number of ways, e.g., “self-controlled and sober minded” (ESV, NET), “serious and disciplined” (HCSB), “self-controlled and clear headed” (CEB). On the one hand, he is encouraging them to “be self-controlled and balanced in their reactions, able to see things in their proper place,” and on the other hand, to “be free from every form of mental and spiritual ‘drunkenness’ resulting from befuddled views and feelings about the future” (Hiebert, 246).

*Second*, he tells them to “love each other deeply” (v. 8a). To go all out when it comes to love. Here *agape* love denotes an intelligent and purposeful love that seeks the welfare of the one loved; it’s the kind of love that can be commanded. His readers are to love this way because wisdom indicates that such love averts conflict and fosters unity (Pr 10:12). “Where love abounds in a fellowship of Christians, many small offences, and even some large ones, are readily overlooked and forgotten. But where love is lacking, every word is viewed with suspicion, every action is liable to misunderstanding, and conflicts abound—to Satan’s perverse delight (cf. Heb. 12:15; by contrast, 1 Cor. 13:4-7)” (Wayne Grudem, *1 Peter*, TNTC, 173-74).

*Third*, he tells them to “offer hospitality . . . without grumbling” (v. 9)—itself an expression of love. “In the early days of the church especially, hospitality was far from being merely a matter of occasional friendly entertainment . . . In a world dominated by paganism in employment and culture, living the Christian faith would often entail temporal loss. Mutual support was therefore vital. Traveling missionaries in particular were dependent upon local believers for their food and lodging. And in the absence of church buildings, believers met for worship in private houses (Rom. 16:5; 1 Cor. 16:10, 19; Col. 4:15)” (Norman Hillyer, *1 and 2 Peter, Jude*, NIBC, 126). According to the former Archbishop of Canterbury, “True Christian hospitality is making people feel at home, when you wish they were at home.”

And *fourth*, he tells them to exercise their spiritual gifts “as faithful stewards” of these expressions of God’s *grace*” (vv. 10-11). Doing so, he distinguishes *speaking* gifts from *serving* gifts. Speaking gifts, whatever they might be, should be exercised with the sort of seriousness befitting the word of God. Serving gifts should be exercised in divine strength rather than one’s own human strength, so that God might get the glory. In general, Christian service must be rendered in a spirit of humility and divine enablement, avoiding the conceit that accompanied the ability to perform the service are one’s own.

Peter concludes with a *doxology*, “To him be the glory and the power for ever and ever. Amen.” Whether “to him” refers to God or to Jesus Christ is difficult to discern; the commentators are divided since the evidence is divided. But the weight of the evidence tips the scale in favor of “to him” referring to Jesus Christ.

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## Word Studies/Notes

v. 7 *end of all things* “The end of all things is at hand means that all the major events in God’s plan of redemption have occurred, and now all things are ready for Christ to return and rule . . . From that perspective all the previous acts in the drama of redemption have been completed – creation, fall, the calling of Abrahm, the exodus from Egypt, the kingdom of Israel, the exile in Babylon and the return, the birth of Christ, his life, death and resurrection, his ascension into heaven, and the pouring out of the Holy Spirit to establish the church. The great ‘last act’, the church age, had been continuing for about thirty years by the time Peter wrote. Thus the curtain could fall at any time, ushering in the return of Christ and the end of the age” (Wayne Grudem, *1 Peter*, TNTC, 172-73).

v. 7 *near* Cf. Jas 5:8. Lit. “has come near;” cf. “is at hand” (ESV); “has drawn near” (DLNT). “To say that ‘the end of all things is near’ is to say that Peter believed, in some sense, that the end of history was imminent” (Scot McKnight, *The NIV Application Commentary: 1 Peter*, 236). “Christ’s appearing ‘is near’ (lit. ‘has come near’) in that it could happen at any moment” (Thomas L. Constable, “Notes on 1 Peter,” 2024 ed., 94, [planobiblechapel.org/tcon/notes/pdf/1peter.pdf](http://planobiblechapel.org/tcon/notes/pdf/1peter.pdf)).

v. 7 *Therefore* “‘Therefore’ [oun] grounds the duties now depicted in the consciousness of the impending end” (D. Edmund Hiebert, “Living in the Light of Christ’s Return: An Exposition of 1 Peter 4:7-11,” *Bibliotheca Sacra* 139:555 [July-September 1982]:245).

v. 8 *deeply* “**Deeply** (*ektenē*): ‘Stretched out,’ in today’s jargon, ‘going all out,’ like a sportsman or a race car driver. The corresponding adverb occurs in 1:22, again in reference to Christian love between believers” (Norman Hillyer, *1 and 2 Peter, Jude*, NIBC, 128). The term “was used to describe the taut muscles of an athlete who strains to win a race (cf. *ektenōs* in 1:22)” (Roger M. Raymer, “1 Peter,” in *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: New Testament*, 853).

v. 8 *love covers . . .* “This quotation from Proverbs 10:12 does not mean that our love covers or atones for our sins. In the proverb the meaning is that love does not ‘stir up’ sins or broadcast them. So the major idea is that love suffers in silence and bears all things (1 Cor 13:5-7)” (Edwin A. Blum, “1 Peter,” in *The Expositor’s Bible Commentary*, vol. 12, 246). “The person with this kind of ‘love’ is willing to forgive, and even ‘cover a multitude of’ the ‘sins’ of others committed against himself or herself, rather than taking offense (Prov. 10:12; James 5:20)” (Constable, 95).

v. 10 *gift, grace* Cf. “God’s gifts of grace come in many forms. Each of you has received a gift in order to serve others. You should use it faithfully” (NIRV). “Gift is *charisma*, a gift of *charis*, grace, i.e., something bestowed freely and without merit on the believer by God that is to be used for the good of the community of believers. See Rom. 12:3-8; 1 Cor. 12:4-11, 27-31” (Hillyer, 128). “God bestows His ‘grace’ on different people in different ways. The gifts (Gr. *charisma*) are aspects of God’s grace (Gr. *charis*)” (Constable, 96).

v. 10 *various* “**In its various forms** translates *poikiloi*, lit. multicolored. Christian gifts of service come in many varieties, but exercised together they form a harmonious pattern. The Greek term is used only in one other place in this letter, in referring to ‘all kinds of trials.’ See commentary on 1:6” (Hillyer, 128-29). “The grace of God is ‘variegated’ (*poililēs*), or ‘manifest itself in various ways’ (BAG, p. 690)” (Blum, 247).

v. 11 *speaks* “*Whoever speaks* includes not just teaching or preaching, but many kinds of gifts involving speech-activity: evangelism, teaching, prophesying, and perhaps singing or sharing words of praise and testimony in the assembled congregation” (Grudem, 175).

v. 11 *as* “This cannot mean ‘as claiming that the words he speaks are God’s own words’. Because that would only be true of Scripture, not of every word spoken during a church meeting. It means rather ‘with the seriousness of purpose which one would use if one were speaking God’s words’” (Grudem, 176). “If someone is called on to speak in the presence of believers or if God’s Spirit prompts a person to speak to the congregation, that person ought to take the opportunity so seriously that the words spoken be considered with reverence” (McKnight, 239).

v. 11 *serves* “Whoever renders service is again a very broad category, which includes any kind of helping or encouraging ministry for the benefit of others in the church (or by extension of the idea, any Christian service or ministry to others outside the church” (Grudem, 176).

v. 11 *To him* To God or to Jesus? Commentators are divided, but “because it would be unnecessarily redundant to ascribe praise once again to God (4:11a does that), it seems more probable that this doxology has Jesus Christ as its object” (McKnight, 239). After a brief discussion of the evidence, another agrees. He writes: “These considerations, especially the word order, make Selwyn’s view [that Jesus Christ is the antecedent] more plausible” (J. Ramsey Michaels, *Word Biblical Commentary*, vol. 49, *1 Peter*, 253).

# 4

## APPLY THE TEXT

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### CENTRAL MESSAGE OF THE TEXT

Facing persecution from outsiders, believers, inspired by hope, must band together in loving service to insiders for the glory of God.

### CENTRAL MESSAGE FOR YOUR LIFE

(Rewrite the Central Message above to personally apply to your own life)



### 3 LIVING QUESTIONS

The “Living Questions” are simple questions we may ask of any text in order to apply the Bible to our life. Answer the questions below as personally as you can.

1. What does this passage teach me about God?

2. What does this passage teach me about myself?

3. What does this passage lead me to do?



## FAMILY TALK

Kids have the ability to make friends in a flash. Imagine taking your preschooler to the park. They see a kid around their age (you know, give or take 5 years). Kid is on the playground; they've got a truck. Boom! Instant best friend that will be talked about for months to come. Your child can't remember to cap the toothpaste and put it where it belongs, but they'll remember that kid at the park every single time you drive by. They'll remember the fun time they had rolling the truck down the slide and reminisce about the goldfish and fruit snacks they shared and how they wanted to invite their new friend to the house. That the couch was broken and the house was a mess concerned them not. They just wanted to be friendly and show their new buddy their room and toys. Why aren't we quicker to be open and welcoming like our children? Why aren't we more hospitable? Maybe it's time for you to jump on the wagon of regularly hosting Home Group. Maybe it's time to plan a sleepover so your kids can bring their friends to church. God has called us to love others deeply and to offer them hospitality, especially our Christian brothers and sisters. This month, let your child take the lead and help them open the doors to your home. Ask them who you should show hospitality to and extend an invitation. Get your child involved and have them help you plan the details. You just might discover your child has the spiritual gift of administration or serving in the process. We're praying for you!

### What Does The Bible Say?

Read 1 Peter 4:7-11

1. What does verse 8 tell us to do and why?
2. What attitude should you have when offering hospitality?
3. What should believers do with the spiritual gifts God gives?

### What Do You Think?

Why do you need to be alert and sober-minded in order to pray?

### What Do You Do?

Invite a friend to spend the night on Saturday and join you for church Sunday morning. Plan a fun sleepover with their favorite food and something unique to do. Be willing to show hospitality.

### CORE COMPETENCY: Love

I love and forgive others no matter what.

### MEMORY VERSE: Ephesians 3:20-21

*"Now to Him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to His power that is at work within us, to Him be the glory."*

## KidPIXCOUPON

Earn 1 KidPIX Token by completing the CENTRALKids Bible Study on this page and another token by memorizing and reciting the memory verse for this week.

Questions: [kids@wearecentral.org](mailto:kids@wearecentral.org)

- I completed my Bible Study
- I memorized this week's verse
- I brought my Bible to church
- I brought a friend



CHILD'S NAME

GRADE

PARENT SIGNATURE

# OUR CORE COMPETENCIES

## CENTRAL BELIEFS

**Authority of the Bible** (2 Timothy 3:16-17)  
*I believe the Bible is the Word of God and has the right to command my belief and action.*

**Church** (Ephesians 4:15-16)

*I believe the church is God's primary way to accomplish His purposes on earth today.*

**Eternity** (John 14:1-4)

*I believe there is a heaven and a hell and that Jesus Christ is returning to judge the earth and to establish His eternal kingdom.*

**The Holy Spirit** (Romans 8:9)

*I believe the Holy Spirit convicts, calls, converts and changes me as a child of God.*

**Humanity** (John 3:16)

*I believe all people are loved by God and need Jesus Christ as their Savior.*

**Identity in Christ** (John 1:12)

*I believe I am significant because of my position as a child of God.*

**Jesus Christ** (Hebrews 1:1-4)

*I believe Jesus Christ is the Son of God who became man, died for sinners and rose from the dead.*

**Life Purpose** (Acts 20:24)

*I believe I am a steward of God's resources and have been redeemed to participate in His Kingdom purposes for His glory.*

**Personal God** (Psalm 121:1-2)

*I believe God is involved in and cares about my daily life.*

**Salvation by Grace** (Ephesians 2:8-9)

*I believe a person comes into a right relationship with God by His grace, through faith in Jesus Christ.*



## CENTRAL VIRTUES

**Love** (1 John 4:10-12)

*I sacrificially and unconditionally love and forgive others.*

**Joy** (John 15:11)

*I have inner contentment and purpose in spite of my circumstances.*

**Peace** (Philippians 4:6-7)

*I am free from anxiety because things are right between God, myself and others.*

**Patience** (Proverbs 14:29)

*I take a long time to overheat and endure patiently under the unavoidable pressures of life.*

**Kindness/Goodness** (1 Thessalonians 5:15)

*I choose to do the right things in my relationships with others*

**Faithfulness** (Proverbs 3:3-4)

*I have established a good name with God and with others based on my long-term loyalty to those relationships.*

**Gentleness** (Philippians 4:5)

*I am thoughtful, considerate and calm in dealing with others.*

**Self-Control** (Titus 2:11-13)

*I have the power, through Christ, to control myself.*

**Grace** (Colossians 3:13)

*I demonstrate forgiveness, mercy and generosity to others, even when they have offended me.*

**Hope** (1 Peter 1:3-5)

*I have a growing anticipation of God's promises and my secure eternity with Him.*

**Humility** (Philippians 2:3-4)

*I choose to esteem others above myself.*



## CENTRAL PRACTICES

**Bible Study** (Hebrews 4:12)

*I study the Bible to know God, the truth, and to find direction for my daily life.*

**Biblical Community** (Acts 2:44-47)

*I fellowship with other Christians to accomplish God's purposes in my life, others' lives, and in the world.*

**Compassion** (Psalm 82:3-4)

*I seek to serve the last, the least and the lost in my community.*

**Disciple-Making** (2 Timothy 2:2)

*I multiply godly beliefs, virtues and practices in others to encourage their spiritual growth in Christ.*

**Evangelism** (Acts 1:8)

*I share Jesus with others through personal proclamation and demonstration of the gospel.*

**Generosity** (2 Corinthians 9:6-11)

*I gladly give my resources to fulfill God's purposes.*

**Prayer** (Psalm 66:16-20)

*I pray to God to know Him, to lay my request before Him and to find direction for my daily life.*

**Single-Mindedness** (Matthew 6:33)

*I focus on God and His priorities for my life.*

**Spiritual Gifts** (Romans 12:4-6)

*I know and use my spiritual gifts to accomplish God's purposes.*

**Worship** (Psalm 95:1-7)

*I worship God for who He is and what He has done for me.*

**Tom Bulick** (M.A. in Educational Leadership, Eastern Michigan University, Th.M. in Old Testament, and Ph.D. in Bible Exposition, Dallas Theological Seminary). For more than forty years, Tom has served as pastor, faculty member, and administrator. Tom was Vice President for Student Life and Associate Professor of Religious Studies at Trinity Western University (Vancouver, B.C.) from 1986 to 1998 and Spiritual Formation Pastor at Central Bible Church (Fort Worth, TX) from 1998 to 2022. He and his wife Ruth have one son, Zach.

**Stephanie Thomas** (B.B.A University of Texas at Arlington). Stephanie is married to James and they have five children: Elijah, Levi, Bo, Ella and Simon. Stephanie has attended Central Bible Church for more than 20 years, has been on staff since 2014, and now serves as Children's Minister.

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**CENTRAL  
BIBLE CHURCH**

8001 Anderson Boulevard  
Fort Worth, Texas 76120  
817-274-1315  
wearecentral.org