Daily Devotion #221

**Focus on God**

**1 Peter 4:7 (NASB)** *“The end of all things is near; therefore, be of sound judgment and sober spirit for the purpose of prayer.”*

Many things in life change. In fact, the only thing in life that is steady is change. And often, when change comes, many people don’t handle it well. They get frustrated or overwhelmed and act out in some strange ways. Some turn to “retail therapy”. That is going on a shopping spree to calm the nerves. Some people go into a state of depression which manifests itself in a variety of ways, from overeating to developing illegal drug habits or turning to alcohol. Others are somewhere in the middle. The reason is because most people don’t know Christ. People who have no relationship with Christ get caught in the life they live, here and now. Even those who are well intentioned and profess to know Christ as their Lord and Savior get caught up in this life and all its changes.

That was what was happening to the people in Peter’s day. They were so focused on what they were going through, they forgot Who they should be focusing on. As you can imagine, the times for those dear people were extremely difficult. They were being persecuted for loving God. But because they were also human beings, they allowed their sin to cause their focus to stay on their day-to-day lives instead of keeping their focus on God. So Peter reminds them several times through his letter to keep a clear mind, to be sober in their spirits. And he says that because their end is coming. Yes, their lives were at stake, but the end Peter is talking about is the end that leads to rejoicing. End in this sense is not an end as you and I would think of it, such as an end of an event or the sudden stop of something. This word is referring to the end of their suffering because the return of Christ is near and/or their arrival in heaven is near. Both of which bring great rejoicing for any child of God.

The important point of Peter’s message is this: Don’t let the eyes of your heart focus on all that is in this life because mostly what happens in this life is evil or at least distracting from being who we should be in Christ. And as was said earlier, many, many Christians live their lives as if this is all there is. They live as if there is no eternity and that Christ is more of a genie to help them with strggles in this life, but not God come in the flesh to rescue us so that we can one day leave this world and be with Him forever.

The word sober is a word that reminds God’s people not to get lost in all the emotions and passions of this life but to focus on being holy and pure and righteous, because we know our time of being with Him is getting closer. Therefore Peter says not to let the world and all its ridiculousness take our hearts and minds away from the truth. The truth that you belong to God - the God who is in control of all things and all people, who will one day come back to this planet and make all things right.

Peter adds to the end of his thought by saying that we should focus our hearts and minds this way for the purpose of prayer. What does he mean by that? He means that when a person is overcome by the changes and challenges of life, their relationship with God is negatively affected. Meaning, they don’t see God spiritually like they should, and their fellowship with Him is hindered. And when fellowship is hindered, communication is hinderd or stopped altogether. In fact, you can mark this down - when a person gets overwhelmed by life, their prayer life is very shallow or nonexistant.

Beloved, don’t let yourself lose focus on God. Make sure every day God is the One you look to for everything. He is your heavenly Father, your Creator, your Provider and much, much more. He loves you. Don’t let Satan distract you from that truth, ever. Keep a sober spirit. The end of everything we know will come and every knee will bow when Christ takes His place as ruler over this world. Keep that as your focus.