

Introduction:

William Miller came to Christ in the mid-19th century, a period of great revival in the churches of the NE USA. It was a time when there was a keen interest in the prophecies of the Bible, especially concerning the return of Christ. Right after his conversion, Miller immersed himself in the book of Daniel, and after 14 years of study, he announced Jesus Christ would return to earth on October 22, 1844. On that morning thousands of people gathered on mountaintops and in churches. Others were in graveyards, planning to ascend in reunion with their departed loved ones. The Philadelphia ladies society clustered together outside town to avoid entering God's kingdom amid the common crowd. When the day passed uneventfully, many Christians grew disillusioned. The unsaved became cynical. The event became known as “The Great Disappointment”, while some of Miller's followers later evolved into the Seventh Day Adventist movement.”

We had the same things happening ...Harold Camping...1988 and again in 2011. Harold Camping stated that the Rapture and Judgment Day would take place on May 21, 2011 and that the end of the world would take place five months later on October 21, 2011. Family Radio spent over \$100 million on the information campaign. Many who believed in the prediction took time off work to prepare for the Rapture. Others spent their life savings on advertising material to publicize the prophecy. One retired transportation agency worker from New York spent \$140,000 on advertising. This certainly was not giving love proper priority.

I. Love Christ's Return

1. Peter writes: The end of all things is near (4:7a). The word translated end (TELOS) means the culmination toward which all human history is moving. History is headed toward the end. The end has not yet come because the Lord is waiting for the Gospel to be preached to all nations before He returns. The phrase the end of all things is near means everything that has to take place before Jesus returns has already taken place. The end of all things is near, even if Jesus tarries none of us know how long we will live. James 4:14 remind us of this truth; **Whereas ye know not what [shall be] on the morrow. For what [is] your life? It is even a vapour, that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away.**

The end of all things for you and me is only a heartbeat away or the twinkling of an eye when Jesus returns (1 Corinthians 15:52). It could happen at any time, each day we should cherish and incorporate love. Seeing souls saved is a

2. The end of all things is imminent even if Jesus tarries because it is “at hand”. The Greek word “en-gē'-zō” (n- gee-so) is to draw near or that it approaches. The end of all things for you and me is only a heartbeat away or the twinkling of an eye when Jesus returns (1 Co. 15:52). It could happen any time, each day we should be getting ready for the end, this will requires 4 things.

3. Peter writes, “be ye therefore sober”... this does not necessary mean sobriety but rather the exercise self-control (4:7b). This means as we prepare for the end we are not to become

emotional or an extremist. As we think of the Second Coming of Christ, we are not to watch world events and try to set a date on a calendar. Neither are we to quit our jobs and go to some mountaintop and wait for Christ return. We need to love the Lord that we work on His behalf to see lost people saved. This is the Priority of God's Love. – I Timothy 2: 4 **Who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth.**

Peter tells us to think clearly and have self-controlled so that we can pray effectively. When our minds are confused, so are our prayers. I believed the major thing here is that we pray. If we really believe that we live in the last days, it is all the more appropriate that we give ourselves to prayer. Many Christians who believe that Jesus is coming based on prophecy and political events fail to apply that belief in the proper way. They fail to apply themselves to more diligent prayer knowing the lost will suffer hell. We must give ourselves to serious prayer. As we see the weight of eternity rushing towards us, we dare not take the need for prayer lightly. This is the Priority of God's Love.

## II Love Means Sacrifice (4:8).

1. Peter writes, **And above all things have fervent charity among yourselves: ... (4:8a).** The phrase *above all* refers to the priority of love. The first virtue listed in the fruit of the Spirit is love (Galatians 5:22) because it is the foundation for all the other virtues in the Christian life. The essential foundation for improving relationships is AGAPE love. We must love when people acts like a jerk or when people are difficult at work, school, church, or wherever. We must love with an AGAPE love this is the sacrificial love Christ has for each of us and He gave us this command in John 13:34: **A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another.**

### **Illustration:**

The tragic fate of Otto Warmbier, is the tragic fate of the millions of North Koreans living in the Kim Jong Un's totalitarian nightmare world...I remember as a teenager watching the news coverage that the U.S.S. Pueblo was captured by the North Koreans. That was 1968 I was angered like many Americans when we learned that the eighty-two surviving crew members were thrown into brutal captivity. The men were required to sit in a rigid manner around a table for hours. Sometime during this ordeal the door was violently flung open and a North Korean guard brutally beat the man in the first chair with the butt of his rifle. The next day, as each man sat at his assigned place, again the door was thrown open and the man in the first chair was brutally beaten. On the third day the same happened again to the exact same man. Knowing the man could not survive another beating a young sailor took his place. When the door was flung open the guard automatically beat the new man senseless. For weeks, the story is told every day another sailor stepped forward to sit in that horrible chair, knowing full well what would happen. Finally, the guards gave up in exasperation. They were unable to beat that kind of sacrificial love...

2. The apostle Paul declares love is the atmosphere in which all gifts, ministry, and relationships must operate in order to be pleasing to God. Love is the foundation for better relationships but we shoot our own, military understands this better. 1 Corinthians 13:1-2  
When enduring suffering or persecution we need people to love and support us. The original support group is the church.

3. We can come across to God as a resounding gong a loud noise created by striking a large metallic disk. We can sound to God like a repeated clashing of a cymbal. It by itself makes irritating, meaningless sounds. Like a gong or cymbal without the accompaniment of an orchestra or band, all our words are just noise without love, agape love...love rules.

4. Communication with a spouse, child, friend, co-worker, or whomever is not so much what we have to say as how we say it. No relationship can survive very long without speaking in love because in relationships without love all we say is just noise.

We must realize the consequences of not loving. Paul list the consequences of not loving. The consequences of not loving are all we say is just noise, all we know is negated, all our faith means nothing, and all we know is null and void. Love Rules and it will demonstrate itself Peter teaches in hospitality.

### III. Loves Opens Our Homes (4:9)

1. Love will show itself in hospitality. If God blessed you with a new home open that home to others. Having someone into your home for a meal is the deepest kind of fellowship. In the privacy of our homes, we can really get to know and love people. Being hospitable is difficult because it takes time, energy, money, and planning, but we are to do it without grumbling (1 Peter 4:9b) because love is always a gracious host. The N.T. saints needed people who were gracious host because many were traveler and not able to stay at local inns for many reasons.

### IV Love Implements Our spiritual gifts faithfully (4:10-13).

1. Paul writes in 1 Corinthians 13:2a: If I have the gift of prophecy and can fathom all mysteries and all knowledge ... but have not love, I am nothing. You can be as brilliant as Albert Einstein or as wise as Solomon, but without love in your ministry, all you know is nullified. All we know is null and void. Every believer is a minister and is equipped by God to minister Love will exercise one Spiritual gifts. They are given to us to enable us to serve others (1 Peter 4:10a). Talents perform, but gifts minister. Since you are unique, no one can do what God wants you to do like you can. If you are not here you can't serve!

2. There are two basic kinds of spiritual gifts: speaking and serving. Therefore, Peter writes: If anyone speaks, he should do it as one speaking the very words of God (4:11a). This means everything the speaker says must be based on Scripture, not human opinions.

3. Then Peter says, If anyone serves, he should do it with the strength God provides ... (4:11b). The word serves (dē-ä-ko-ne'-ō) translates the Greek word from which we get our English word

“deacon” it means servant. Serving gifts minister to people by what we do rather than what we say. We are to use our gifts with the strength God provides. For everything God calls us to do, He equips and empowers us to do by the Holy Spirit.

Everyone part is important; each has its job to do. Even the smallest, seemingly least important part of the body of Christ is important.

A man was rebuilding the engine to his lawn mower, and when he finished, he had one small part left over, and he couldn't remember where it went. He started the engine and it ran great, so he figured that the part was useless – until he tried to stop the lawn mower, and it wouldn't stop! Even the smallest, seemingly least important part of the body of Christ is important.

4. We should never deny the place of suffering v.13 in building godliness in the Christian life. Though there is much needless pain we bear through lack of knowledge or faith, there is also necessary suffering. If suffering was a suitable tool to teach Jesus (**Hebrews 5:8**), it is a suitable tool to teach His servants.

#### Conclusion:

When you purchase a new automobile, certain features are "standard equipment," while others like GPS or on-star are "optional." In the Christian life, loving one another is "standard equipment"; it is not "optional." Regardless of the circumstances, how unlovable one might be, or how they have hurt us, if we are true Christians, we must love them.

The clearest proof of God's love is the cross, and that's why we have a cross standing upon the property of our church. That cross says to our community, "This is how much God loves you." Not only is God the God of love, but also the God of holiness and justice who cannot tolerate sin or allow it to go unpunished.