

SERIES: "CHOSEN AND EXILED" - - 6/23/24 (#9) PASTOR LEE

1 Peter 4: 7-11 - "The end of all things is at hand; therefore be self controlled and sober-minded for the sake of your prayers. (8) Above all, keep loving one another earnestly, since love covers a multitude of sins. (9) Show hospitality to one another without grumbling. (10) As each has received a gift, use it to serve one another, as good stewards of God's varied grace: (11) whoever speaks, as one who speaks oracles of God; whoever serves, as one who serves by the strength that God supplies - in order that in everything God may be glorified through Jesus Christ. To Him belong glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen.

- V-7....."The end of all things.....".....sounds so ominous- -taking the word "end" to its ultimate...sounds like End Times? Yet, Peter is calling for calm and seriousness ("sober-minded").....firstly, in the sense that people are able to continue to pray... In these tense times of today, this is a fabulous reminder that we need to be a people that are not surprised by all the craziness of the days we live in but to take everything to the Lord so that He can give us direction.
- V-8- 11 - -So, notwithstanding the challenges of our personal lives and the turmoil all around us, also love one another.... And rely on the Church's foundation of love by adding hospitality and service using God's gracious gift that He bestows on each of us.
- Pastor Lee speaks of great hospitality and service at Christ First, starting with the fact that we have at least 34 home-based Small Groups...emphasizing the hospitality aspect by the leaders. Just like the food servers, welcome team, youth leaders, KIDZ team, worship team, technical support and so many others.....ALL showing their dedication to hospitality AND service.
- And, in doing so, use the gift that you've been given when you placed your faith and trust in Jesus.....a gift that was empowered by the Holy Spirit. He notes: "Unfortunately, some of us, unfortunately, all we ever do is use it for a company that makes lots of money off of us for doing that. Paul is saying...use that gift God gave you for Him!
- Examples of a Spiritual gift: leadership, giving, helper, empathy, etc. "God's"Varied Grace" refers to the wise, God-focused' use of such gifts. It's not something earned, deserved or even asked for....but it's for you to use in a Godly way. You are managing your gift from God and doing so for Him.....It is not yours but His. Metaphoric story about the teenager, ungracious about the gift of a Jeep. Turning story upside-down with appreciative teen actively using the Jeep for good/helping family...what a blessing felt by parents.

Pastor Lee speaks of dynamic happenings at Church....eg. recent expansion of Kidz Town, and in the present, expansion/breath of scope of youth ministry as well as the new Great Valley presence. These are substantial Christ-focused efforts that will require more and more people willing to volunteer their services. Regarding the latter, Pastor Rob will lead the substantial effort in starting up/leading that Church.....with services starting in the Fall. As a next step, we need volunteers that can help duplicate all the wonderful services/functions here at CF Downingtown.