

next verse. Their indulgence was the ordinary rule of life in the ancient pagan world. It is far more generally the rule of our unchristian fellow-citizens than we in our respectable self-satisfaction care to acknowledge. But *our* rule is to be *the will of God*, and according to that will we are to *live out the rest of our time in the flesh*—our lifetime.

3. *The time past of our life* [omit "of our life"]. Better, "your life." *May suffice*. "Is sufficient." "Not even the past time ought to have been wasted in lust, but since you cannot recall it, at least lay out the future to better account." *Wrought the will* ["desire"] of the *Gentiles*. By conforming to their heathenish practices. "Gentile" is here used in the sense of pagans. Their "will" means their tastes, inclinations, and habits. *Lasciviousness*. In the plural form—outbreaks of lasciviousness. *Lusts*. Desires for indulgence; the inner principles of wickedness. *Excess of wine* ["wine-bibblings"]. Amid modern conditions and in ordinary circumstances all indulgence in wine is excess. The three vices here named are personal; the next three are social. *Revelings*. Frolics. The ancient pagans adopted sensual frolics as part of their religion, and the gods and goddesses were worshiped by the maddest and foulest of orgies. Torches, singing, dancing, and fanatical rites became ingrafted on nearly all the old religions. Ecstasy, fury, and sensuality were intermingled in the extravagant behavior of both men and women. *Banquetings* ["carousings"]. "Drinking bouts." *Abominable idolatries*. That they were indeed abominable these details show, but the thought here is that they were unlawful violations of God's law.

4. *They think it strange that ye run not with them* to ["into"] the same *excess of riot*. The whole world was running together to ruin and was half conscious of the awful fact, but they could not understand the self-control of those who had established their faith in God through Christ. *Speaking evil of you*. They began by misunderstanding and went on to misrepresentation. The early Christians were charged with almost every infamous crime.

5. *Who shall give account to him that is ready to judge the quick* ["living"] *and the dead*. God will clear you and punish your maligners.

6. *For this cause* ["For unto this end"]. Because the judgment is imminent. *Was the gospel preached also to them that are dead* ["even to the dead"]. This is usually explained to mean that all responsible human beings now dead received in their lifetime sufficient light to enable them, if so disposed, to be saved by the atonement of Christ; the Old Testament Church, especially, received the Gospel in a very true sense, in the Mosaic rites and ceremonies; for the gospel is the fulfillment of the law. *That they might be judged* ["indeed"] *according to men in the flesh*. The same principles of judgment will be applied that would have been applied had they continued to live until the Lord came. *Live according to God in the spirit*. Live in the glorified, spiritual body into which all that believe will be exalted when he comes (1 Thess. 4. 17). The death of Christ was not designed to deliver us from mortal death, but to lift us into a nobler life, spiritual and eternal, which will be perfect in the resurrection.

7. *The end of all things is at hand*. "Has come near." The old order is passing away. "Christ is coming, and time counts but little before the supreme fact, He comes." *Be ye therefore sober* ["of sound mind"], *and watch unto prayer* ["and be sober unto prayer"]. Opportunity for prayer is the reason for sobriety.

8. *Have fervent charity among yourselves* ["being fervent in your love among yourselves"]. Have your love toward one another intense.

9. *Use* ["using"] *hospitality one to another without grudging* ["murmuring"]. This in ancient days was one of the most natural evidences of love. The deep principle of hospitality is as much as ever a Christian grace.

10. Every gift and talent and every possession of our life is an investment of God; something intrusted to us as *stewards*. God's grace is manifold. Let us be faithful.

11. An expansion of the thought of verse 10. Let each one engage in all activity as performing noble duties in God. If he directs he is to be God's oracle; if he serves he is to be God's servant, *that God in all things may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom be praise and dominion* ["whose is the glory and the dominion"] *forever and ever*.

HOMILETICAL AND PRACTICAL NOTES.

The Christian Church as it now is in the world is a greater miracle than any recorded in the Scriptures. Indeed, it embodies every won-

der and marvel from the Genesis of Moses to the Apocalypse of St. John. Just as a grain of wheat represents all the known laws of

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