***All Things New***

New-Life Lessons from the Apostle Peter’s First Letter

**New Behavior: A Life of Love**

Or, Avoiding the So-Called Life

1 Peter 4:7-11

Peter is painting a portrait of a Christian. What, exactly, does a believer in Christ do? How does he/she behave? And more importantly, what is the motivation? Christian, live a life of love. Here’s how. . .

***Focus! Because the time is so short, make it count by taking life seriously, thoughtfully, and prayerfully.*** v. 7

Distracted. That’s what we are and in many ways who we are. And that drives us in two dangerous ways. First, we are easily sucked into the bottomless pit of entertainment, fantasy sports, gaming, and living in a virtual world. Second, we are in constant motion with images before us and audio in our heads to the point that the ability to reflect quietly upon eternal things becomes impossible, even “in church,” which, more and more people expect to match the rest of their so-called lives. Prov. 1:20-33

***Love! The key thing about you is whom and how you love, since love mirrors the work of Jesus, covering s*in.** v. 8

Love is not a cover-up, denial, or an enabling of sin, but a life lived in such a way that the guilt, shame, and notoriety of sin is replaced by a quiet redemption and restoration of sinners. 1 Cor. 13

***Serve! As you help others, do so cheerfully and diligently, according to your opportunities and gifts.*** vv. 9-11a

Focused love leads to serving others God’s way. Everyone who takes Jesus seriously will want to join a church and be a vibrant part of His present incarnation. The distracted life is the self-absorbed life, most unfulfilling. Don’t waste your life ignoring God’s plan. Don’t let a bad church experience rob you of eternal reward. Eph. 1:15-23

***Worship! For as you lay down your life for others, God is most glorified, just as He was in Jesus.*** v. 11b 1 Jn. 3:16

***Applying Truth to Life: Avoid a so-called life. How?***

*Pay attention.* Live life, don’t let life live you. Think about your days and nights and ask if they are profitable for eternity.

*Care wisely.* Love gives, lust takes. Love conquers sin, lust fuels the fires of sin. Lust is fleeting, love lasts.

*Make your days count.* Don’t sleepwalk, drugged by activity, mindlessly. Live purposefully the life for which God created you, and use your gifts accordingly.

*Enjoy God.* We glorify God when we make much of Him, and we make much of Him by enjoying His presence and doing what delights Him. It is your highest ca*lli*ng to live as God commands, but also your greatest joy. Worship God, not worship.