

First Peter 4:8-19

4:8 – “Above all” does not mean “love” is more important than what was just discussed, but instead begins a new topic of which “love” is the first item on the new list. Also, used by James in James 5:12

Ektenes is the adverb translated “earnestly” or “deeply”. (See 1:22) This Greek word means “stretched out” and used in ancient Greek texts to refer to a horse galloping at full speed and a runner leaning for the finish line string.

“Love covers a multitude of sins” – (Proverbs 10:12 – “*Hatred stirs up strife, but love covers all offenses.*” ; James 5:20)

1. Where there is love there is willingness to overlook offenses and small faults. Love is willing to forgive and move on. Opposite is to be suspicious which leads to misunderstandings. Hebrews 12:15 is a warning.
2. This is not saying your sins are forgiven if you are a loving person. For example, giving of money to the poor does not cover the sins you commit or the offensive things you say.
3. This is not saying you are forgiving the sins in God’s eyes. God will still deal with sin. But, your love can help keep personal relationships on track.
4. This is not a reference to God’s love covering our sins.

4:9 – Hospitality “without grumbling” or “without murmuring.”

1. Hospitality in the NT
 - a. Romans 12:13
 - b. 1 Tim. 3:2
 - c. Titus 1:8
 - d. Hebrews 13:2
 - e. 3 John 5
 - f. 2 John 10
 - g. James 2:21, 25
 - h. 1 Timothy 5:10
2. Inns (or, hotels) were rare and most often associated with bad characters and immoral behavior.
3. Travelers were vulnerable.
4. This likely refers to giving traveling Christians (teachers and apostles) room and board. By 100 AD and the time of the writing of the Didache (“Teaching”) standardized regulations had to be established to prevent abuse by travelers or people posing as teachers.
 - a. Food and clothing were provided for up to three days for a proper teacher.
 - b. The fourth day the teacher moved on to another city, or they got a job and were self-supporting.

4:10 – The mention of love and of being hospitable (to traveling teachers) leads to the point that everyone has gifts (1 Cor. 12:7)

Literally 4:10 says, “ministering as good stewards manifold grace of God” (diakononutes ius kaloi oikouomoi poikiles charitos theou)

“various forms” is “**poikilous**” (ποικιλοῦς) – is used to describe the skin of a leopard, different colored veins in marble. **Poikilous** translates as “changeful”, “diversified.” This word helps explain why there is no exact list of the spiritual gifts that is given with numbers and descriptions.

The gifts were given by God to his people (apparently at conversion).

These are not natural talents, but spiritual endowments because it is called “grace” here and in **Romans 12:6**

These gifts need to be developed.

These gifts need to be used for service

These gifts are not for self-promotion or self-profiting.

Believers do control the gifts (1 Cor. 14:32 and 14:30, etc.)

Believers do develop the gifts

Believers can ask for gifts (1 Cor. 12:31; 14:1, 13)

Believers are called “stewards” which is the household manager who was often a slave.

The lists of the spiritual gifts are never total, comprehensive or ordered in similar fashion:

- 1 Corinthians 12:8-10
- 1 Corinthians 12:28-30
- Romans 12:6-8
- 1 Peter 4
- Ephesians 4:11

1. Divine Origin of the Gifts

- a. The gifts are not natural talents
- b. The gifts are from God as the Spirit, the Son and the Father work together through the believer.

2. Diversity of Gifts

- a. There are different gifts which means the Spirit gives a variety of gifts to the people
- b. There are different services which means Jesus has a variety of places and ways he wants to use the selection of gifts that the Spirit has empowered.
- c. There are different workings which means God the Father produces a wide variety of results from the Spirit’s gifts and the Lord’s use of those gifts.

3. Purpose of Gifts

- a. For the common good
- b. 1 Cor. 14:3, to strengthen, encourage, comfort
- c. 1 Cor. 14:12, to build up the church
- d. Eph. 4:12, to prepare God’s people, to build the body of Christ

4. Grace of the Gift

- a. Gifts are not earned by people
- b. Gifts are not deserved
- c. Gifts are distributed by the Spirit as He determines
- d. 1 Cor. 12:11, “All these are the work of one and the same Spirit, and he gives them to each one, just as he determines.”
- e. Romans 12:3 “For by the grace given me I say to every one of you. . .”
12:6, “we all have different gifts, according to the grace given us. . .”
- f. 1 Peter 4:10, “Each one should use whatever gift he has received to serve others, faithfully administering God’s grace in its various forms.”
- g. 2 Corinthians 9:8, “God is able to make all grace abound to you, so that in all things at all times, having all that you need, you will abound in every good work.”

5. Distribution of the Gifts

- a. Given to every one
- b. Each person has a place in the body for each person is a part of the body
- c. 1 Corinthians 12:12

6. Time of Receiving Gift

- a. At the point of the new birth.

7. Development of the Gift

- a. 1 Tim.4:14,15, “Do not neglect your gift, . . .”
- b. 2 Tim. 1:6, “I remind you to fan into flame the gift of God. . .”
- c. Each person has a gift, but that gift must be developed.

8. Control of the Gift

- a. 1 Cor.14:32, “The spirits of prophets are subject to the control of prophets.”
- b. Each person is placed in control of their gift.
- c. This is not demon possession where a person losses control of their will.

4:11 – Two examples are used by Peter which can also be seen in Acts 6:2 (and, again in Romans 12:7):

- a. The Word of God - “speaks” refers to all speaking gifts, not causal conversation.
- b. Waiting on Tables - “serves” is to be done in the supernatural strength of God, not in human effort. The word “supplies” is used here and in 2 Cor. 9:10 and refers to paying the expense of training a chorus

for the theater or to accept the cost for something. Wealthy citizens would pay for the play or a road or a feast, etc. God is going to pay the expense material, physically and emotional. This is the difference between burnout and complaining or fruitful continuation in joy

The praise is to go to God as we serve in the strength he provides and speak the words he gives. This verse closes with a doxology which helps strengthen the argument that Peter is ending this section, and beginning a new point in verse 4:12

4:12 – Peter begins this closing section with the word *agapetoi*, or “beloved” which is translated as “dear friends.”

“Painful trial” is literally “fiery trial.”

Some teach that this was Nero’s persecution that included the burning of Christians, but this is unlikely because:

- This letter is from the early 60’s AD (it appears), and Nero’s persecution began in Rome around 64 AD and led to Peter’s death in 67/68 AD and Paul’s execution in the fall of 67 AD or spring of 68 AD.
- The readers are in provinces north of Antioch in eastern Asia. Nero’s persecutions focused mainly on the city of Rome
- These believers are not suffering “death” but are struggling with “suffering” in life.

Suffering as a Christian is not a strange thing. In fact, it is normal.

Daniel is told of God’s method of purifying his people in Daniel 11:33-35.

Jesus’ suffering as our example is used at the beginning of 1 Peter 4:1.

Jesus’ suffering is given as our example also in:

- Colossians 1:24,
- Hebrews 12:4
- Philippians 2:5-11

4:13 – Rejoice in suffering because of Luke 6:22-23

4:14 – Hebrew **Messiah** means “anointed one”. Greek *christos* means “anointed”.

The addition of “-ian” at the end of a word or name was used to identify those who followed the person or belonged to the group. It was natural that followers of *christos* would be called “Christians” (Followers of Herod or supporters of the Herodian political platform were called Herodians. Christians first identified by that name 17-20 years earlier in Antioch in 43 AD in Acts 11:26.

Interesting that the followers of the “anointed one” are told that they have also been anointed when Peter calls them Christians and says “the Spirit of glory and of God rests on you.”

4:15 -

Criminals (taking people’s life, property and rights as in murder, thief, meddler) :

- Murderer
- Thief
- Criminal
- Meddler - *allotriepiskopos* (αλλοτριεπισκοπος) made up of two words:
 - *allotri* = “belonging to another”
 - *Episkopos* = overseer
 - This means “a self-appointed overseer in other men’s matters.”

4:16 -

4:17 -

4:18 -

4:19 -