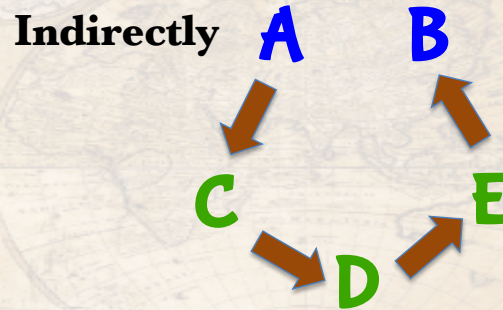


Direct and Indirect

We experience/receive things directly and indirectly

Directly **A → B**

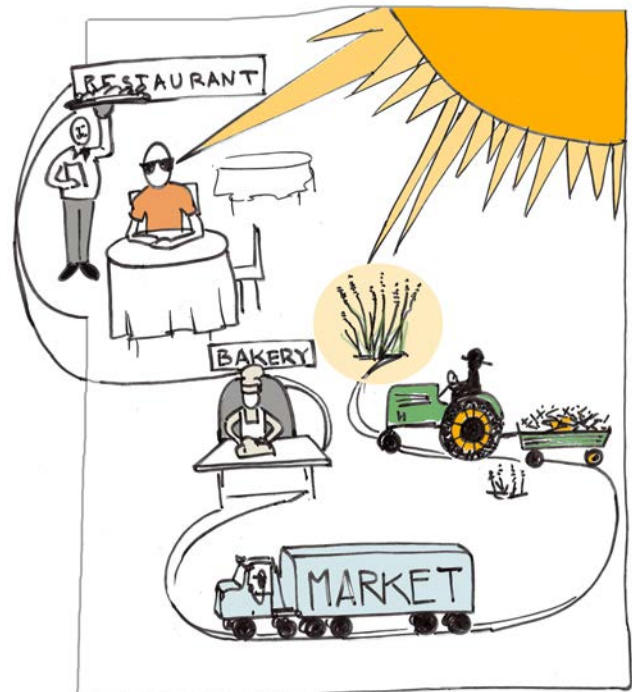
- GETTING THE FOOD YOU EAT
- GETTING ELECTRICITY
- TALKING TO PEOPLE
- GETTING MEDICAL HELP
- EXPERIENCING GOD AND GOD'S GRACE?



Reflecting God's Glory

1 Peter 4:7-11

Chinese: page 1970
 Spanish: page 1550
 Brown: page 1223
 Green: page 830



Setting the context

- Last Sunday: “Parable of the Shrewd Manager” *Luke 16:1-13*
 - The manager of a rich household was losing his job
 - Creatively and skillfully, he used the last days of his job to prepare for the days after his job was over
 - Jesus said: Be like this manager: creatively and skillfully use the **small, decaying, temporary** wealth of this world to gain **abundant, true, permanent** wealth in God’s Kingdom
- Peter almost certainly heard Jesus teach this parable
 - Peter wrote 2 letters to Christians who were living as foreigners in the kingdoms of the world

1 Peter 4:7-11

7a: The end of all things **has come near**

7b: • Kingdom of God: “Already and Not yet”

8-11a: • Already: God’s values in God’s power today

11b: • Not yet: In the kingdoms of this world

- Any time, Jesus may return to establish His Kingdom

Chinese: page 1970
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- **All things** will be transformed

“The coming of Christ, at a time known only to God, requires constant expectancy, and as our blessed hope, motivates the believer to **godly living, sacrificial service** and **energetic mission.**” *Our doctrinal statement*

1 Peter 4:7-11

7a: The end of all things **has come near**

7b: With heads & hearts, see clearly for prayer

8-11a: • Perhaps like shrewdness: understand the situation

11b: clearly, so you can act skillfully and strategically

- The wealth of this world will soon fail us
- Now is a unique time for obedience to God
- Many things could cloud our hearts and minds about the Gospel and God's Kingdom
- Prayer in sober hearts and minds
 - Fellowship with God
 - Expression of love for people

1 Peter 4:7-11

7a: The end of all things **has come near**

7b: With heads & hearts, see clearly for prayer

8-11a: Love → hospitality → administering God's grace

11b: • Love isn't stopped by a multitude of sins

“Love covers over a multitude of sins” →

- “Hatred stirs up conflict,
but love covers over all wrongs.”

Proverbs 10:12

- “Whoever would foster love covers over an offense,
but whoever repeats the matter separates close friends.”

Proverbs 17:9

Then Peter came to Jesus and asked, “Lord, how many times shall I forgive my brother or sister who sins against me? Up to seven times?”

Jesus answered, “I tell you, not seven times,
but **seventy-seven** times.”

Matthew 18:21-22

Peter’s paraphrase: “a multitude of sins”

1 Peter 4:7-11

7a: The end of all things **has come near**

7b: With heads & hearts, see clearly for prayer

8-11a: Love → hospitality → administering God's grace

- 11b:
- Love isn't stopped by a multitude of sins
 - "Hospitality": meeting the needs of people
 - At that time: it required more 'hosting'
 - Peter focused on Christians for Christians
 - God's varied grace/gifts: words and actions
 - Faithful steward: same word as manager in Luke 16
 - Source and power: God's Word & the Holy Spirit
 - In every Christian, for the good of others
 - One big idea ... expressed in multiple steps

1 Peter 4:7-11

7a: The end of all things **has come near**

7b: With heads & hearts, see clearly for prayer

8-11a: Love → hospitality → administering God's grace

11b: For Christ's glory, that is His already

- When God's people experience His grace through His people, Christ is praised
 - He restored this **image of God** to humanity
- We glorify God when we use the grace He has given us to serve others

The Big Idea

Christ is glorified
and His people experience His grace
when each one of God's people
use what God has given them
for the good of others

Spirit
Abilities
Resources
Love
Words
Strength

- How did the disciples see and experience God?
 - The presence of Jesus = God made visible & understandable
 - “If God should speak to me in his majesty, I would run away—just as the Jews did. However, when he is clothed in the voice of a man [Jesus] and accommodates himself to our capacity to understand, I can approach him.” *Martin Luther*
- How do people today see and experience God?
 - Directly: Holy Spirit
 - Indirectly: God's grace through people

In Scripture and in life, this is God's primary plan

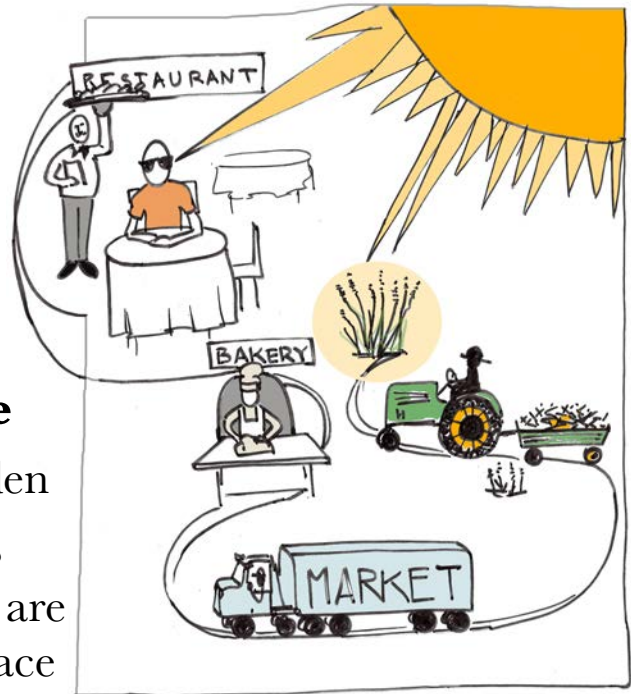
- God can and does give His grace directly to His people

Plus...

- One part of being made in the “image” of God:

God entrusts His work in the world to His people

- Adam: Take care of the garden
- Christians: Administer God’s grace to people → you and I are the supply chain of God’s grace



How, then, can they call on the one they have not believed in? And how can they believe in the one of whom they have not heard? And how can they hear **without someone preaching** to them? And how can anyone preach **unless they are sent**? As it is written:

“How beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news!”

Romans 10:14-15

God’s primary plan for people to see and experience God is when God’s people speak and serve God’s grace to others

Application

- **See clearly: the end of all things has come near**
 - The values of this world are generally not the values of the Kingdom of God
 - For example: “Success” or “Self fulfillment”
 - **It takes training of head and heart** to see and to value Kingdom values more
 - God uses people as a key means of giving His grace to others
 - Others for you, and you for others
 - “Shrewdness”: creatively and strategically spending small, decaying, temporary wealth to gain abundant, true, and permanent wealth
 - **It takes training of head and heart**
- Urgency
Not panic or fear**

Application

- **See clearly: the end of all things has come near**
- **Pray accordingly**
 - Focus our prayers on the use of life experiences for the values of the Kingdom of God
 - So that people will *know* God in Christ more and more richly
 - **It is good** to ask for things that make life easier and less burdensome
 - **It is essential** that we desire even more the wealth of heaven
 - Let this perspective guide our prayers
 - Pray with people for them
 - Praying **with people** can often be the means of God answering the prayer for them

Application

- **See clearly: the end of all things has come near**
- **Pray accordingly**
- **Be good stewards of what God has given you**
 - Know what God has given
 - Includes “natural” gifts enriched by the Spirit
 - Includes supernatural gifts unexplainable otherwise
 - A variety of gifts and a variety of degrees of the gifts
 - Eagerly accept what God has given us, whether “little” or “much”
 - Spiritual gift surveys can be a helpful part of **discernment**
 - Develop them: study, experiment, practice, be mentored, ...
 - Apply them in love for God’s people and the glory of Christ
 - Match what you have with the needs

Direct: Dreams & visions Conviction of the Spirit

Words:

Teaching
Listening
Encouraging/counseling
Leading Life Group
Mentoring
Praying
Emails / texts / ...
Leading
Ministry teams
and more...



Service:

Setup & tear down team
Snacks & meals
Giving money and things
Driving
Practical helps
Hosting events
Finance
Administration
Health
Music
Technology
Media, and more...

- The Ministry of the Church
 - Not
 - a **small group of people** who administer God's grace
 - Rather
 - some people who help develop God's gifts in all the people
 - so that **all the people** bring God's grace to each other
- Our expectations of membership
 - Every member receives spiritual care by others
 - Life Group, mentoring, family, ...
 - Every member serves others with God's provisions to them
 - Both words and actions
 - In the grace God has given you

**It is happening here!!
May it grow**

The Big Idea

Christ is glorified
and His people experience His grace
when each one of God's people
use what God has given them
for the good of others

**Are you serving in Christ? Be in awe!
What (else) has God given you to give to others?**