

A Secure and Living Hope

1 Peter 1:3-5

February 19<sup>th</sup>, 2023

1. Because of His great \_\_\_\_\_, we have new \_\_\_\_\_. (1:3a)
2. Because of the \_\_\_\_\_, we have a living \_\_\_\_\_. (1:3b)
3. Because of the \_\_\_\_\_ of God, we have a secure \_\_\_\_\_. (1:4-5)  
Our inheritance. . .  
Will not \_\_\_\_\_  
Cannot be \_\_\_\_\_  
Will not fade \_\_\_\_\_
4. Applying the Word  
\_\_\_\_\_ for our living hope.

Questions for Discussion/Reflection on 1 Peter 1:3-5

1. How does the intro of v. 3 follow the same formula as Ruth 4:14; 1 Samuel 25:32; and Psalm 28:6?
2. Why do we need a new birth? According to verses 3 and 23, how do we obtain this new birth?
3. In what way is our new birth “according to His great mercy?” How would you define mercy? In what circumstances is it most helpful to remember that God is merciful to you?
4. In what sense is our hope “living”? What is the contrast of living hope?
5. How is Jesus’ resurrection connected to our regeneration?
6. Verse 5 says we are protected by the power of God. From what are we protected? From what are we NOT protected? (see 1:6; 4:12)
7. What is the practical benefit of this section when a person is suffering? i.e. How could you use this section when you are suffering or you are trying to encourage someone else going through something really hard?

Some questions are partially adapted from *Knowing the Bible: 1 Peter* by Crossway.

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Big idea: We praise God because He has given us a secure and living hope through Jesus' resurrection.

If I ask you, "what's your favorite part of attending a wedding?" You might have an answer. If you're a teenage boy with zero interest in the ceremony, you might say the food afterward at the reception. If you're a young girl, you might think of the wedding dress. If you've been married for 30 years, you might think of the vows that remind you of your own vows. There are a number of ways we would answer, and the question itself wouldn't seem strange.

What if I ask you a different question, "what's your favorite part of attending a funeral?" The question itself might seem strange since funerals are marked by sadness and grief, so it's hard to think in terms of a "favorite" part. But I think I have a favorite part. It's the eulogy. I love hearing about how the person we are remembering and mourning impacted others. If I knew them well, I often learn things about them I never knew. If I didn't know them, those few minutes of a service are such a window into their life. The word "eulogize" comes from a combination of Greek words that mean "to speak a good word about." It doesn't originally have anything to do with funerals, but that is the context in which we use it today.

And it's the word that starts our section today. It's translated "Blessed be" or "praise to", but it's this Word "eulogize."

What is God "eulogized" for in this passage? What is He praised for? Blessed for?

There is so much about God we could speak a good word about. We could recognize His provision of our food and shelter. We could honor Him for His creative genius. We could speak well of His attentiveness to our prayers.

But this passage goes to our salvation in a long sentence - that we would call a run-on sentence but Greek plays by different rules – that goes from v. 3-13. The main clause is "blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ," and then it hits on different aspects of our salvation that direct our hearts to speak well of God.

First, he speaks of a secure and living hope through Jesus' resurrection.

Then he speaks of a deep joy in our salvation even when suffering

And then he throws it back to all the OT prophets who longed to see the fulfillment of God's promises in the salvation we now experience.

It follows a convention that was often used in the OT

Blessed be the Lord...who...and then it describes something that God has done.

**Genesis 14:20** And blessed be God Most High, Who has delivered your enemies into your hand."

~~**Ruth 4:14** Then the women said to Naomi, "Blessed is the LORD who has not left you without a redeemer today, and may his name become famous in Israel.~~

~~**1 Samuel 25:32** Then David said to Abigail, "Blessed be the LORD God of Israel, who sent you this day to meet me,~~

Why should we praise God according to 1 Peter 1? He gives us three reasons.

1. Because of His great **mercy**, we have new **life**. (1:3a)
  - a. In His mercy He caused us to be born again.
    - i. He brought about our spiritual rebirth or regeneration.
    - ii. Piper - Here we have the doctor's eagerness and the surgical instrument that bring about the desired result – a new life with a living hope.
      1. Doctor's eagerness – great mercy (return to this in a moment)

## 2. Surgical instrument

- a. V. 3 – through the resurrection
- b. V. 23 – through the living and enduring word. . . this is the word which was preached to you – the gospel.
  - i. **1 Peter 1:23, 25** for you have been born again not of seed which is perishable but imperishable, *that is*, through the living and enduring word of God... And this is the word which was preached to you.
- c. The two instruments are really one – the good news of the gospel is that Jesus died and rose again for your sins – that word was preached to you.

### iii. The new birth is something God does.

1. He has caused us to be born again – 1 Peter 1:3

### iv. The new birth is necessary.

1. **John 3:3** Jesus answered and said to him, "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born again he cannot see the kingdom of God."

### v. The new birth is accomplished through the Word.

1. **1 Peter 1:23** for you have been born again not of seed which is perishable but imperishable, *that is*, through the living and enduring word of God.

### vi. We don't need mere moral improvement, sentimental hope, or practical tools for living. We need a miracle. We need the miracle of a new heart, new life, regeneration.

## b. Not according to any merit in us. Nothing in our future, nothing in our past caused Him to give us new life. It was His mercy and His mercy alone.

- i. Mercy is goodness toward those in misery and distress
- ii. Sam Storms: Whereas grace contemplates sinners as *guilty*, mercy contemplates them as *miserable*. Mercy is the response of the divine heart to us when the results of our sin and corruption are seen: we are pitiable, pathetic, helpless to extricate ourselves from the condition into which sin has plunged us.
- iii. Mercy is what you feel when you see images of a grieving child rescued from the earthquake in Turkey but now orphaned. You think about their misery and need and want to help.
- iv. It's His compassionate care to the needy. It's an attitude of emotion roused by the affliction of another. It's related to the words pity, compassion, and sympathy.
- v. And His mercy is great. Which is good, because our need is great.
- vi. When you feel the deep weight of sin, the consequences of your actions, the hardship when someone else wrongs you and you're hurting, what do you think God's disposition is toward you?
  1. Angry? Apathetic? Disinterested? Uncaring?
  2. Or mercy.

## c. We have been born again TO something. That thing is the living hope we possess.

## 2. Because of the **resurrection**, we have a living **hope**. (1:3b)

### a. Our hope is living in contrast to a hope that is dead, lifeless, futile.

- i. **Ephesians 2:12** *remember* that you were at that time separate from Christ. . . having no hope and without God in the world.

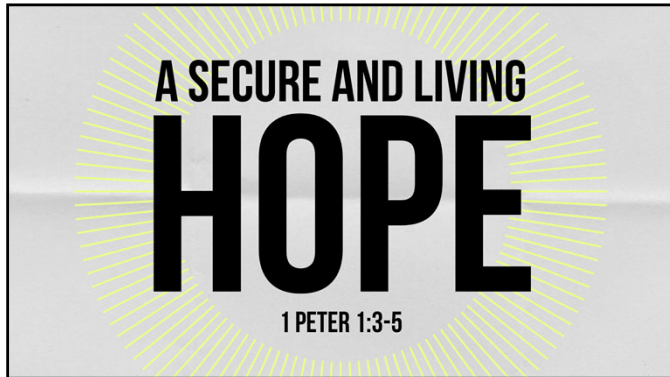
- ii. **1 Thessalonians 4:13** But we do not want you to be uninformed, brethren, about those who are asleep, so that you will not grieve as do the rest who have no hope.
- b. What role does the resurrection play in our hope?
  - i. The context is suffering. Written to people who feel like spiritual exiles, who are facing increasing opposition and hardship.
  - ii. Sanchez: Jesus was mocked, beaten, abused, and killed, but he did not remain in the grave. If that were the case, our faith would be in vain, and we would be a hopeless people. Without Jesus' resurrection we would still be in our sins. But Jesus did in fact rise "from the dead" (1 Peter 1:3). Because of Jesus' resurrection, we also have the hope of our own resurrection. Death is not the last word. As the likelihood of persecution increases for Christians in the West, we need to arm ourselves with this living hope...The worst persecution can do is kill us; and through Christ's resurrection from the dead, we can be sure that we will follow him through death into life. That is a hope that nothing in this life can extinguish.
  - iii. This week a friend just told me he learned his wife has stage 4 colon cancer. To hear that news is like getting pounded in the chest with a sledge hammer. One thing he said, so sincerely, not tritely, is that they believe in the resurrection, they know they'll be ok. He was more worried about their kids, their church body, etc.
    - 1. That is what a living hope based on the resurrection Jesus looks like in real life.
- c. God has caused us to be born again to a living hope.
  - i. He has also caused us to be born again to obtain an inheritance.
- 3. Because of the **power** of God, we have a secure **inheritance**. (1:4-5)
  - a. Inheritance is usually what one receives by being part of a particular family.
  - b. Three words describe this inheritance, all in the negative – all explaining what cannot happen to this inheritance.
  - c. Our inheritance. . .
    - i. Will not **perish**
      - 1. Not able to be destroyed.
      - 2. Physically it appears that we are the fragile, impermanent ones and creation will go on forever. In reality, although this present life is fleeting and brief, our inheritance with God – our relationship with Him, our enjoyment of Him on the new earth, won't perish.
    - ii. Cannot be **defiled**
      - 1. undefiled, unstained, unsoiled by sin.
      - 2. We have a hard time imagining a world undefiled by sin. No locks on the door or alarms. No guns for self-defense. No need for police or jails. No need for a woman walking alone to be vigilant. No child afraid of bullies or abuse.
      - 3. Even the best of this life is defiled.
        - a. You might have a great family vacation, but there might still be a 3 hour conflict with a 4 year old or a stomach bug on your beach day.
        - b. A joyful wedding is tainted by feuding relatives who refuse to talk to each other.

4. Not so for our inheritance.
- iii. Will not fade away
    1. Literally used of a flower in bloom that does fade away.
      - a. It's hard to believe now with the fresh snow outside, but in a month our tulips will start to pop up through the soil. And a few weeks later they will be in bloom. But they will fade.
    2. One Greek dictionary defines this term as "eternally fresh."
    3. The joys of our inheritance will be eternally fresh.
      - a. Do you ever worry that you will get bored in heaven or on the new earth? Will we tire of it? No, it will be unfading.
  - d. Our inheritance is reserved for us and we are protected for it.
    - i. Sanchez – a future inheritance is all very well, as long as we get there. How can we know that we will?
      1. Famous joke about car reservations by the comedian Jerry Seinfeld about showing up at a car rental desk to pick up a reservation but although they took the reservation they have no car to pick up.
        - a. Jerry: You know how to \*take\* the reservation, you just don't know how to \*hold\* the reservation. And that's really the most important part of the reservation: the holding. Anybody can just take them. It's the holding that is important.
      2. The good news, says Peter, is that the God who keeps our inheritance secure in heaven (v. 4) is also the God who keeps his children secure on earth during their sojourn "for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time" (v. 5).
    - ii. Consider how this promise is linked to the previous statements that we are chosen according to the foreknowledge of God the Father in vv. 1-2 that we saw last week.
      1. No surprises in your future that invalidate His choice. No sin you commit that was outside of the payment of Jesus.
    - iii. My early Christian life was marked by fear that I would lose my salvation. That I would sin big enough or doubt deep enough or disappoint God seriously enough that my salvation would be lost. This was one of the key passages that transformed my thinking and set my soul on solid ground.
      1. My inheritance is secure. And I am protected for that inheritance, not by my own merit or strength but by the power of God.
      2. It's through faith but He must be maintaining that faith as well since it's His power that protects us.
      3. Here is a glorious promise for every Christian - the God who gave us saving faith as a gift will also sustain and strengthen our faith through suffering until that day when we receive our imperishable, undefiled, unfading inheritance.
  - e. Our salvation will be revealed in the last time.

- i. Meaning, when Jesus returns and sets up His kingdom. Until then we'll always live in some degree of conflict with the values and priorities of any society that we are in.

#### 4. Applying the Word

- a. **Praise God** for our living hope.
  - i. This isn't a "do" passage. It is a "done" passage.
  - ii. Is there a single command in this passage? No.
  - iii. It focuses on what God has done for us.
  - iv. Sometimes we're more comfortable with "do" passages because we get convicted, we take steps to change, etc. It feels more concrete.
  - v. 1 Peter will have passages like that. But it starts with what God has done, not with what we are to do.



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**1 Thessalonians 4:13** But we do not want you to be uninformed, brethren, about those who are asleep, so that you will not grieve as do the rest who have no hope.

3. Because of the power of God, we have a secure inheritance. (1:4-5)

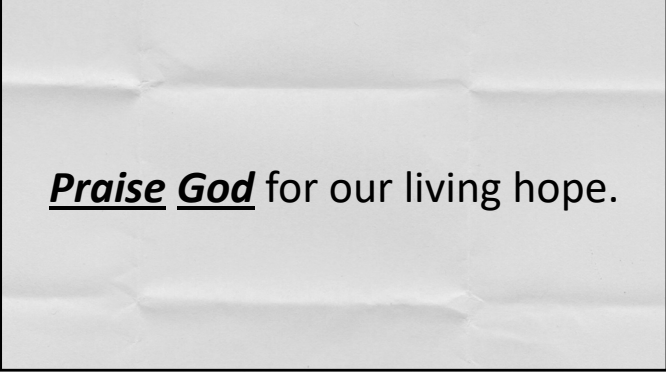
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