

Title: Praise: the Cause, the Means and the End
Text: 1 Peter 1: 3-5
Date: January 13, 2011
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Out text begins with the apostle Peter saying, "*Blessed [be] the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ*" Where the word "blessed" is used from God toward man it means "happy" and "favored" is the man. When this word is used from man toward God it means "praise" be to God.

Hebrews 13:15 By him therefore let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is, the fruit of our lips giving thanks to his name.

Every believer has great reason to bless God? What do we praise God for?

1 Peter 1: 3: Blessed [be] the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, 4 To an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you, 5 Who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.

Divisions:

1. We praise God for the Cause of our salvation--"*according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again*",
2. We praise God for the Means by which he saves us "*by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead*"..."*kept by the power of God through faith*"...
3. We praise God for the End for he has rebirthed us "*unto a living hope...to an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you...*"*unto salvation ready to be revealed.*"

I. WE PRAISE GOD FOR HIS MERCY. This is the CAUSE OF OUR BEING BORN TO NEWNESS OF LIFE.--"according to his abundant mercy"

No merit in any sinner causes God to bestow any spiritual blessings on us.

1. Our need of being "born again," declares that this mercy is not by our merit--something was wrong in our first birth--we were only flesh and spiritually dead

John 3:6: That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.

2. When every child is conceived in the womb of their mother, Adam's sin-nature is passed to us. King David said,

Psalm 51: 5: Behold, I was shapen in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive me.

3. What does this result in? Our nature is corrupt without us doing one thing. Therefore we come forth estranged: no knowledge or fear of God; No love to God, no desire to know God or his ways; Conceived with a nature which hates everything about God, especially the Gospel of God's salvation by his free and sovereign grace in Christ through faith alone.

For those religious who are yet in this sin-nature- It is the sin of the unregenerate nature that makes men detest that apart from God's mercy and grace--we can not live, or repent or believe or have any willingness to believe on Christ. In our sin-nature we think ourselves righteous.

Psalm 58: 1: «To the chief Musician, Altaschith, Michtam of David.» Do ye indeed speak righteousness, O congregation? do ye judge uprightly, O ye sons of men? 2: Yea, in heart ye work wickedness; ye weigh the violence of your hands in the earth. 3: The wicked are estranged from the womb: they go astray as soon as they be born, speaking lies. 4: Their poison [is] like the poison of a serpent: [they are] like the deaf adder [that] stoppeth her ear; 5: Which will not hearken to the voice of charmers, charming never so wisely.

The cause of the new birth is the rich, abundant mercy of God. Sometimes ascribed to God the Holy Spirit, sometimes to God the Son, and in our text to God the Father.

Ephesians 2: 1: And you [hath he quickened], who were dead in trespasses and sins; 2 Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience: 3 Among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others. 4: But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, 5 Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved;) 6 And hath raised [us] up together, and made [us] sit together in heavenly [places] in Christ Jesus: 7: That in the ages to come he might shew the exceeding riches of his grace in [his] kindness toward us through Christ Jesus. 8: For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: [it is] the gift of God: 9: Not of works, lest any man should boast. 10 For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.

Notice Eph 2: 7: Why does God save this way? "That" God might show the exceeding riches of his grace in his kindness toward us through Christ Jesus.

- How freely he loved us--without a cause in us!
- How abundantly he shed his grace upon us!
- Unsearchable, inexhaustible riches of grace!

Application: Child of God is there anything more valuable than God's mercy and grace to you? Spiritual life, ears to hear, eyes to see, hands and feet to walk after Christ--repentance and faith--are all "according to God's abundant mercy." This is our motivation and power and constraint to do as Peter says, 1 Peter 2: 1-3.

II. WE PRAISE GOD THAT WE ARE BEGOTTEN--"v3: by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead." AND ARE 5: "kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation"

Romans 4:25: Who was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification.

By his death Christ JUSTIFIED all for whom he died. He made satisfaction to God for those given him of the Father and reconciled each one to God. By his resurrection he testifies in the hearts of his children through the Spirit that our justification has been accomplished by his death--we shall be saved by his life! His resurrection declares it to us.

If you have been born again--you have experienced the exceeding greatness of his power, SAME POWER by which he raised Christ from the dead. (Eph 1: 18-21) Not only sovereignty and sheer power, though it is that. But the power of justice satisfied, of satisfaction--the power of Christ's blood which demands our birth. The power of covenant grace!

By his resurrection--we are kept by his power in his resurrected glory--saved by his being raised, to ever-live to make intercession before God the Father.

Romans 5: 10: For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life.

The Saviour's work which cost Him His blood is finished, now He dose all from his throne in glory! He died while we were enemies, reconciled us-he is keeping not his enemies, but his friends whom he hath reconciled! So from the first hour he quickens you in power--to the last hour on this earth he shall keep you--we shall be saved by his life!

Jude 24: Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy, 25: To the only wise God our Saviour, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and ever. Amen.

Application: This is the strength of our faith and perseverance. We have no strength, no perseverance apart from Christ but by Christ we have strength and perseverance depending wholly upon him. Our text v5: "Kept through faith" not rebellion and disobedience, not by our own strength, not by the mighty power of that faith so many boast of as an extension of their own fleshly works.

- But faith which looks to Christ
- Lives by Christ
- And wholly depends upon Christ.
- Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ!

III. WE PRAISE GOD BECAUSE THE END TO WHICH HE CALLED US IS EVERLASTING LIFE WITH HIM IN GLORY

1 Peter 1; 3: "unto a living hope"...4: to an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you..." 5: "salvation ready to be revealed".

Our hope is a living hope because Christ lives. He said, "Because I live, ye shall live also."

1. **Our is inheritance incorruptible**--the brethren had seen the Roman legions destroy city after city.

Illustration: We can enter into this--everything our forefathers' worked for--seems to be in jeopardy in the country.

Nothing can destroy our eternal inheritance: God the Father blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ--Christ accomplished the work--there is laid up for us a crown of righteousness.

2. **Our inheritance is undefiled**--No sooner do we think we have found something pure here in this life, than we discover it is defiled, defiled by us, by sin--but in that day-

Rev. 21:27: And there shall in no wise enter into it any thing that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie: but they which are written in the Lamb's book of life.

3. Our eternal inheritance **fades not away**--it is as eternal as our God, eternal as our redemption by Christ, as eternal as the life we have now by his Spirit.-

3. It is yours because it **is reserved FOR YOU** by your Redeemer. Nothing remains to be done--it is "**salvation READY TO BE REAVLED IN THE LAST TIME.**"

Romans 6: 8: Now if we be dead with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with him: 9: Knowing that Christ being raised from the dead dieth no more; death hath no more dominion over him. 10: For in that he died, he died unto sin once: but in that he liveth, he liveth unto God. 11 Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Application: This is what we confess in water baptism.

Romans 6:4: Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. 5: For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection: 6 Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with [him], that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin.

Application: Oh, but truthfully, and Peter knew this so well--we start out strong, but how easy it is for us to be cast down: by

- Trials we face in this world
- Because of rulers of this world who exert such power
- In our own homes we face trials

- From our own fleshly lusts which war against the soul we seem to have no power over them
- This is world is a constant reminder of our weakness

Aren't you glad it was Peter wrote this: Simon Peter denied the Lord and went back to his nets, Peter's hope was restored by the **resurrected Lord**. So it was with those on the road to Emmaus and the others he showed himself to.

Luke 24: 38: And he said unto them, Why are ye troubled? and why do thoughts arise in your hearts? 39: Behold my hands and my feet, that it is I myself: handle me, and see; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me have. 40: And when he had thus spoken, he shewed them his hands and his feet...[they watched him rise up to heaven] 52 And they worshipped him, and returned to Jerusalem with great joy: 53: And were continually in the temple, praising and blessing God. Amen.

Paul said this was his strength to fight with beasts at Ephesus--he had the advantage--if he died, he would be raised from the dead.

1 Cor 15: 32: If after the manner of men I have fought with beasts at Ephesus, what advantageth it me, if the dead rise not?

If we have experience the exceeding greatness of his power in regeneration, we have great reason to rejoice that we shall be resurrected in the end by him--this is our hope.

Romans 8:11 But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you.

1 Corinthians 15: 21: For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead. 22: For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive... 47 The first man is of the earth, earthy: the second man is the Lord from heaven. 48: As is the earthy, such are they also that are earthy: and as is the heavenly, such are they also that are heavenly. 49: And as we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly....54 So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory. 55: O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? 56: The sting of death is sin; and the strength of sin is the law. 57: But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

To you who are experiencing this joy, tasting of his grace for the first time, I rejoice with you:

1. Thank God the Father for his mercy in Christ
2. Praise him that all is "by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead"--you shall be kept by the power of God
3. To an inheritance, to salvation ready to be revealed in the last time. Confess him in baptism and walk in newness of life!

Brethren, as Peter was restored by Christ and is restoring his brethren in this epistle, reviving, refreshing, encouraging--may God revive us to thank him for his mercy in Christ and may he use us to restore one another with these precious promises wherein we greatly rejoice!

Amen!