

INTRODUCTION

1. Please take God's Word and turn with me to 1 Peter 1:3-5
2. In our last time together, we looked at the first two verses, which introduced us to ~~Peter and his readers.~~
3. Peter identified his readers as those who are "chosen according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, by the sanctifying work of the Spirit, to obey Jesus Christ and be sprinkled with His blood."
4. Now Peter talks about his reader's inheritance
5. Listen as I read verses 3-5
6. Read 1 Peter 1:3-5
7. These words are very important to those whom Peter refers to as "aliens scattered" (v.1) because they are words of hope in the midst of suffering
8. "Suffering" is the theme of this epistle as seen by the "seven different words used for it" (Merrill F. Unger, Unger's Bible Handbook, p.796)
9. Three of the seven words: "suffer, " "suffering," and "suffered" appear a total of 14 times in this letter
10. The overall terms occur 22 times
11. Chapter 5, verse 13 tells us that this letter was written from Rome when it says, "She who is in Babylon, elect together with you, greets you; and so does Mark my son."

12. "Babylon" is used here in a figurative sense as it is used in the book of Revelation to refer to Rome where "Peter ministered...until his martyrdom" (Life Application Bible Commentary: 1 & 2 Peter and Jude, p.8)
13. "Some of the most severe...persecutions came at the hands of Nero. This Roman emperor became obsessed with eliminating Christians and their faith" (Ibid., LABC)
14. Four years before his death, "a large part of Rome was destroyed by fire, probably started at Nero's order.
15. The emperor publicly accused the Christians in the city, giving him an excuse for [the] terrible atrocities" that followed (Ibid., LABC)
16. The Roman historian Tacitus said, 'Besides being put to death, [Christians] were made to serve as objects of amusement; they were clad in the hides of beasts and torn to death by dogs; others were crucified, others set on fire to serve to illuminate the night when daylight failed' (Annales 15.44 quoted in the Life Application Bible Commentary: 1 & 2 Peter and Jude, introduction)
17. So when Peter writes this letter to those who are scattered in "Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia" (1:1), he is writing "to those living in Rome and throughout the Roman province of Asia...to encourage [them] to remain strong" in the midst of persecution
18. He does that by focusing their attention on their future "inheritance" that is "reserved in heaven for [them]" (1:4)
19. Peter identifies himself in verse 1 as the author
20. Verses 1 and 2 follow the customary salutation of that day which included: the writer, readers, and the greeting
21. The writer is "Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ."
22. The readers are "aliens scattered in Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia" also referred to as the "chosen"

at the end of verse 1

23. Verse 2 ends with the greeting: "Grace to you and peace be yours in the fullest measure."
24. Now in verse 3 Peter begins his letter by talking about the salvation of the believer
25. As we have seen in the past, we see again here that God is the one who initiates salvation by choosing or electing those whom He would save before the foundation of the world
26. He says at the end of verse 1 into verse 2: "who are chosen, according to the foreknowledge of God the Father."
27. Some believe that "foreknowledge" is God looking down through the corridor of time and seeing who would believe and therefore choosing them. But that is not the meaning of "foreknowledge."
28. The Greek word for "foreknowledge" (prognosis) refers "to God's eternal, predetermined, loving, and saving intention
29. It "means that God planned before, not that He observed before (cf. Ex. 33:17; Jer. 1:5; Amos 3:2; Matt. 7:23)."
30. God said to Jeremiah in Jeremiah 1:5, "Before I formed you in the womb I knew you, And before you were born I consecrated you; I have appointed you a prophet to the nations."
31. God "planned" before not "observed" before in calling Jeremiah to be a prophet and in setting His love and affection on Israel
32. He didn't base it on what He "observed" in them
33. Deuteronomy 7:7-8 says, "The Lord did not set His love on you nor choose you because you were more in number than any of the peoples, for you were the fewest of all peoples, 8 but because the Lord loved you and kept the oath which He swore to your forefathers, the Lord brought you out by a mighty hand and redeemed you from the house of slavery, from the hand of Pharaoh king of Egypt."

34. "God pre-thought and pre-determined or predestined each Christian's salvation" (The MacArthur Study Bible, 1 Peter 1:2)
35. In 1:20, Peter used the related verb "foreordained" or "foreknown," a form of *proginosko*, in reference to God's knowledge from eternity past that He would send His Son to redeem sinners
36. Usage of this verb cannot mean that He looked into future history and saw that Jesus would choose to die, so He made Him the Savior
37. In the same way that God the Father foreknew His plan for Christ's crucifixion from before the foundation of the world, (Acts 2:23; cf. 1 Peter 2:6), He foreknew the elect
38. In neither case was it a matter of mere prior information about what would happen
39. Therefore *foreknowledge* involves God's predetermining to have a relationship with some individuals, based on His eternal plan
40. Verse 3 essentially says that "God...according to His great mercy has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead."
41. Spoken in similar manner as Ephesians 2:4-5, Peter states that our salvation is entirely the work of God
42. Ephesians 2:4-5 says, "But God, who is rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, even when we were dead in trespasses, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved)."
43. This truth causes Peter to launch into praise to God for our salvation and, again, is an offer of hope to his readers who are presently suffering or will suffer at the hands of the Roman emperor Nero
44. There are 5 features of *Our Eternal Inheritance* that I want us to see together this morning

45. First, notice *the source of our inheritance* in verse 3.

I. The Source of Our Inheritance (v.3a)

"Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ."

1. God (v.3a)

1. Peter begins by praising the One who is the source of our inheritance
2. "Blessed" Gr.eulogetos, from which we get our words "eulogize" and "eulogy" means "to praise, to celebrate with praises" (Kenneth Wuest, Word Studies in the Greek NT)
3. This word literally means "to speak well of" (W.E. Vine, Vine's Expository Dictionary)
4. The Greek text omits "be," which the translators added
5. In the original, the sentence literally begins, "Blessed the God."
6. Paul uses this same term in his letter to the Corinthians and the Ephesians to give God praise for His work in our lives
 1. 2 Corinthians 1:3-4 - "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and God of all comfort, who comforts us in all our tribulation, that we may be able to comfort those who are in any trouble, with the comfort with which we ourselves are comforted by God."
 2. Ephesians 1:3-6 - "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ, just as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love, having predestined us to adoption as sons by Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will, to the praise of the glory of His grace, by which He made us accepted in the Beloved."

2. Father (v.3a)

"Blessed be the God and *Father of our Lord Jesus Christ*"

1. Peter further identifies the source of our inheritance as the "*God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.*"
2. This phrase identifies God "in a distinctly Christian way" (MacArthur)
3. Historically the Jews had blessed God as their creator and redeemer from Egypt but those who became Christians were to bless God as "the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ."
4. With one exception (Mat.27:46), every time the Gospels record that Jesus addressed God, He called Him 'Father' or "My Father"
5. When Jesus did this He was breaking with Jewish tradition that regarded God as the Father of a nation and not the personal God of an individual
6. Further, in calling God His Father, Jesus was claiming to share His nature
7. In John 10:30 (while speaking with the Jews at the Feast of Dedication) Jesus said, "I and the Father are one."
8. Later He said to Philip in John 14:9, "Have I been with you so long, and yet you have not known Me, Philip? He who has seen Me has seen the Father; so how can you say, 'Show us the Father'?"
9. Jesus affirmed that He and the Father possess the same divine nature – that He is fully God (John 17:1, 5)
10. The Father and the Son mutually share the same life – one is intimately and eternally equal to the other – and no one can truly know one without truly knowing the other
11. Mat.11:27 - "All things have been delivered to Me by My Father, and no one knows the Son except the Father. Nor does anyone know the Father except the Son, and the one

to whom the Son wills to reveal Him."

3. God is the Father of *our Lord Jesus Christ*

1. "One commentator calls Peter's use in verse 3 of Christ's full redemptive name 'a concentrated confession.' All that the Bible reveals about the Savior appears in that title
2. *Lord* identifies Him as sovereign ruler; *Jesus* as incarnate Son; and *Christ* as anointed Messiah-King
3. The apostle personalizes that magnificent title with the simple inclusion of the pronoun *our*
4. The divine *Lord* of the universe belongs to all believers, as does the *Jesus* who lived, died, and rose again for them, as does the *Christ*, the Messiah whom God anointed to be their eternal King who will grant them their glorious inheritance" (John MacArthur, 1 Peter, p.31).
5. God is the source of our inheritance. Now notice...

II. The Motive for Our Inheritance (v.3b)

"Who according to His great mercy."

1. His great mercy was the motive behind God granting believers eternal life
 1. Paul said in Ephesians 2:4, "But God, who is rich in mercy..."
 2. In Titus 3:5 Paul said that it was "according to His mercy He saved us..."
2. Mercy Focuses on the Sinner's Miserable, Pitiful Condition

All believers were once in that wretched, helpless condition, compounded by a deceitful heart, corrupt mind, and wicked desires that made them slaves to sin, headed for just punishment in hell. Therefore, they needed God, in mercy, to show compassion toward their desperate, lost condition and remedy it.

1. Mercy is not the same as grace
2. Mercy concerns an individual's miserable condition, whereas, grace concerns his guilt, which caused that condition
3. Divine mercy takes the sinner from misery to glory (a change of condition), and divine grace takes him from guilt to acquittal (a change of position)
4. The Lord grieves over the unredeemed sinner's condition of gloom and despair
5. That is clearly seen in Ezekiel where God calls Israel to turn back to Him

1. Ezekiel 18:23 - "Do I have any pleasure at all that the wicked should die?" says the Lord God, "and not that he should turn from his ways and live?"
2. Ezekiel 18:32 - "For I have no pleasure in the death of one who dies," says the Lord God. "Therefore turn and live!"

6. Jesus' healed people of diseases to illustrate the compassionate, merciful heart of God toward sinners suffering the temporal misery of their fallen condition

Matthew 14:14 says, "And when Jesus went out He saw a great multitude; and He was moved with compassion for them, and healed their sick."

3. Apart From Even the Possibility of Any Merit or Worthiness on the Sinners Part, God Grants Mercy to Whomever He Will

1. Romans 9:15-16 says, "For He says to Moses, "I will have mercy on whomever I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whomever I will have compassion." So then it is not of him who wills, nor of him who runs, but of God who shows mercy."
2. "Out of His infinite compassion and free, abundant, and limitless mercy, He chose to grant eternal life – it was not

because of any thing sinners could do or deserve" (MacArthur).

3. The source is God, the motive is mercy. Notice 3rd...

III. The Appropriation of Our Inheritance (v.3c)

"Has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead."

1. In Order for Sinners to Receive An Eternal Inheritance from God, They Must Experience His Means of Spiritual Transformation, the New Birth

1. Jeremiah asked in Jeremiah 13:23, "Can the Ethiopian change his skin or the leopard his spots

Jeremiah's graphic implied a negative answer to the question of whether or not sinners could change their natures (cf.17:9)

2. Humanity's sinful nature needs changing

1. That's why Jesus "came...preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God, and saying, 'The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand. Repent, and believe in the gospel'" (Mk.1:14-15)

2. Jesus said to Nicodemus in John 3:7, "...you must be born again."

3. He gives the reason why in verses 17-21: "For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved. "He who believes in Him is not condemned; but he who does not believe is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God. And this is the condemnation, that the light has come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil. For everyone practicing evil hates the light and does not come to the light, lest his deeds should be exposed. But he who

does the truth comes to the light, that his deeds may be clearly seen, that they have been done in God."

3. Only God, working through His Holy Spirit, can transform the sinful human heart

1. Jeremiah 31:31-34 - "Behold, the days are coming, says the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah— not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt, My covenant which they broke, though I was a husband to them, says the Lord. But this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the Lord: I will put My law in their minds, and write it on their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people. No more shall every man teach his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, 'Know the Lord,' for they all shall know Me, from the least of them to the greatest of them, says the Lord. For I will forgive their iniquity, and their sin I will remember no more."

2. In Acts 2:38-39, Peter said, "Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. For the promise is to you and to your children, and to all who are afar off, as many as the Lord our God will call."

3. John 1:12-13 says, "But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, to those who believe in His name: who were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God."

4. Peter says that God has "caused us to be born again"

1. "Caused us to be born again" Gr.anagennao, this is from an "aorist participle, and refers merely to the past fact of begetting, "begat us."

2. The meaning is referring to a "renewal, new again."
Thus, regeneration is spoken of here, the act of the Holy Spirit imparting to us a new life, making us partakers of the divine nature and thus children of God, a begetting anew" (Kenneth Wuest, Word Studies in the Greek NT)
3. Titus 3:4-7 says, "But when the kindness and the love of God our Savior toward man appeared, not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us, through the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Spirit, whom He poured out on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Savior, that having been justified by His grace we should become heirs according to the hope of eternal life."
2. Peter Declared that Regeneration Results in Believers Receiving a "Living Hope"
 1. The unbelieving world knows only dying hopes

Proverbs 10:28 - "The hope of the righteous will be gladness, But the expectation of the wicked will perish."
 2. Believers have a living, undying hope
 1. Romans 5:5 says, "Now hope does not disappoint, because the love of God has been poured out in our hearts by the Holy Spirit who was given to us."
 2. Ephesians 4:4 says, "There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called in one hope of your calling."
 3. That "living hope" will come to a complete, final, and glorious fulfillment
 1. Romans 8:22-25 says, "For we know that the whole creation groans and labors with birth pangs together until now. Not only that, but we also who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, eagerly waiting for the adoption, the redemption of our body. For we were saved in this

hope, but hope that is seen is not hope; for why does one still hope for what he sees? But if we hope for what we do not see, we eagerly wait for it with perseverance."

2. Galatians 5:5 says, "For we through the Spirit eagerly wait for the hope of righteousness by faith."
3. "At death the believers' hope becomes a reality as they enter the glorious presence of God and the full, unhindered, joyous fellowship with the Trinity, the angels, and other saints" (MacArthur)
4. The means of Christians' appropriating this living hope and eternal inheritance is spiritual birth, and the power for that appropriation was demonstrated by "the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead"
5. Jesus is the resurrection and the life - John 11:25-26, "Jesus said to her [Martha], "I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in Me, though he may die, he shall live. And whoever lives and believes in Me shall never die. Do you believe this?"
6. "If Christ has not raised, your faith is worthless; you are still in your sins" (1 Corinthians 15:17 - NASB).
7. "Christ rose from the dead, forever securing the believer's living hope in heaven by finally conquering death" (MacArthur).
8. The source of our inheritance is God, the motive is mercy, the appropriation is God causing us to be born again. Next notice...

IV. The Nature of Our Inheritance (v.4a)

"To obtain an inheritance which is imperishable and undefiled and will not fade away."

1. The Key Word in This Entire Passage is Inheritance, Which is Wealth Passed Down, or a Legacy One Receives As a Member

of a Family

1. This concept had roots in the Old Testament, which the Jewish readers in Peter's audience would identify with
 2. In fact the same Greek root (kleronomia) rendered "inheritance" is used in the LXX to speak of the portions of Canaan allotted by God to each tribe in Israel except Levi (Num.18:20-24; Josh.13:32-33)
 3. The word is also used a number of times of other kinds of inheritance (Num.27:7-11)
 4. "The Old Testament repeatedly affirms that under the old covenant the people of God, the nation of Israel, received an inheritance (Num.26:53-56; 34:2, 29; Deut.3:28; 26:1; 31:7; Josh.11:23; 14:1; 1 Kings 8:36; 1 Chron.16:18; Ps.105:11; cf. Ps.78:55).
 5. Peter told his readers that just as Israel received an earthly inheritance, the land of Canaan, so the church receives a spiritual inheritance in heaven (Acts 20:32; 26:18; Eph.1:11, 18; Col.1:12; 3:24; Heb.9:15).
 6. The apostle reminded them that in the midst of their persecution they ought to praise God and patiently wait for His promised eternal inheritance" (John MacArthur, 1 Peter, pp.34-35).
2. Peter Gives Three Descriptive Terms to Further Define the Kind of Inheritance Believers Obtain

It is "imperishable and undefiled and will not fade away"

1. It is "imperishable"

"Imperishable" Graphtharton, refers "to what is not corruptible, not liable to death, or not subject to destruction" (MacArthur)

2. It is "undefiled"

1. "Unfiled" Gr.amianton, this "describes things that are unstained or unpolluted"
2. Everything is the fallen creation is stained or polluted by sin (Rom.8:20-22; 1 John 5:19), and therefore is flawed
3. It "will not fade away"
 1. "That phrase translates the word amaranton, which was used in secular Greek to describe a flower that did not wither or die.
 2. The term in this context suggests that believers have an inheritance that will never lose its magnificence.
 3. None of the decaying elements of the world can affect the kingdom of heaven" (MacArthur).
 4. "As begotten children of God, we become His heirs, and joint-heirs with His Son Jesus Christ (Rom. 8:17), and thus come into an inheritance.
 5. This inheritance is incorruptible because it belongs to the future life which the risen saints share with God Himself.
 6. It is undefiled as our great High Priest is undefiled (Heb. 7:26 same word).
 7. It is non-fading, not able to wither away, as a flower would" (Kenneth Wuest, Word Studies in the Greek NT).
 8. Last, notice...

V. The Security of Our Inheritance (vv.4b-5)

"Reserved in heaven for you, who are protected by the power of God through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time."

1. Our Inheritance is Reserved in Heaven (v.4b)

1. "Reserved" Gr.teteremenen, means, "guarded" or "watched over."
 2. "The perfect passive participle conveys the idea of the already existing inheritance being carefully guarded in heaven for all those who trust in Christ. Not only will that inheritance not change, but no one will plunder it" (MacArthur).
 3. The perfect tense of this word expresses "a past activity with results that continue in the present; God has been keeping and still keeps the inheritance there—prepared, reserved, certain, and waiting" (Life Application Bible Commentary, p.28).
 4. Jesus said we are to lay our treasure up "in heaven" because that is the securest place in the universe
 5. Matthew 6:19-21 says, "Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal; but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also."
 6. The apostle John characterizes it as a place where "nothing unclean, and no one who practices abomination and lying, shall ever come into it, but only those whose names are written in the Lamb's book of life" (Rev.21:27 - NASB).
2. Those Who Possess this Inheritance Are Protected By The Power of God (v.5)
- "Who are protected by the power of God through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time."
- "God's power is His sovereign omnipotence that continuously protects His elect. If God is for believers, no one can successfully oppose them" (MacArthur)

1. Paul gave this glorious truth to the believers at Rome

Romans 8:31-39 - "What then shall we say to these things?

If God is for us, who can be against us? He who did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things? Who shall bring a charge against God's elect? It is God who justifies. Who is he who condemns? It is Christ who died, and furthermore is also risen, who is even at the right hand of God, who also makes intercession for us. Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? As it is written: "For Your sake we are killed all day long; We are accounted as sheep for the slaughter." Yet in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us. For I am persuaded that neither death nor life, nor angels nor principalities nor powers, nor things present nor things to come, nor height nor depth, nor any other created thing, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord."

2. Jude makes a similar statement in Jude 1:24, "Now to Him who is able to keep you from stumbling, And to present you faultless Before the presence of His glory with exceeding joy."
3. The Christian's continued *faith* in God is evident of His keeping and protecting work
4. "At conversion, God energizes faith in believers' hearts, and as He keeps them He continues to energize their faith.
5. By His grace, God's omnipotent, protecting power and the believer's perseverance of faith always work hand in hand" (MacArthur).

CONCLUSION

1. All of this culminates in "salvation ready to be revealed in the last time" (1:5).
2. Just as the persecutions and testings they were experiencing, it was for the purpose of their faith, "though it is tested by fire, may be found to praise, honor, and glory at the revelation of

Jesus Christ" (1:7).

3. Do you praise God for your salvation?
4. He is the source, motive, appropriation, nature, and security of our inheritance.
5. Let's praise Him for it!
6. If you're here today and are compelled to come to Christ, call on Him now
7. Confess and repent of your sin and turn to Him now
8. He alone can save you and grant you forgiveness of your sin and eternal life with Him
9. Let's pray