

## OUR HOPE AND GLORY IN CHRIST JESUS

### 1 Peter 1:3-25

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His abundant mercy has begotten us again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled and that does not fade away, reserved in heaven for you, who are kept by the power of God through faith for salvation ready to be revealed in the last time. In this you greatly rejoice, though now for a little while, if need be, you have been grieved by various trials, that the genuineness of your faith, being much more precious than gold that perishes, though it is tested by fire, may be found to praise, honor, and glory at the revelation of Jesus Christ, whom having not seen you love. Though now you do not see Him, yet believing, you rejoice with joy inexpressible and full of glory, receiving the end of your faith—the salvation of your souls.

Of this salvation the prophets have inquired and searched carefully, who prophesied of the grace that would come to you, searching what, or what manner of time, the Spirit of Christ who was in them was indicating when He testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ and the glories that would follow. To them it was revealed that, not to themselves, but to us they were ministering the things which now have been reported to you through those who have preached the gospel to you by the Holy Spirit sent from heaven—things which angels desire to look into. Therefore gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and rest your hope fully upon the grace that is to be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ; as obedient children, not conforming yourselves to the former lusts, as in your ignorance; but as He who called you is holy, you also be holy in all your conduct, because it is written, "Be holy, for I am holy." And if you call on the Father, who without partiality judges according to each one's work, conduct yourselves throughout the time of your stay here in fear; knowing that you were not redeemed with corruptible things, like silver or gold, from your aimless conduct received by tradition from your fathers, but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot.

He indeed was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you who through Him believe in God, who raised Him from the dead and gave Him glory, so that your faith and hope are in God. Since you have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit in sincere love of the brethren, love one another fervently with a pure heart, having been born again, not of corruptible seed but incorruptible, through the word of God which lives and abides forever, because "All flesh is as grass, And all the glory of man as the flower of the grass. The grass withers, and its flower falls away, But the word of the Lord endures forever." Now this is the word which by the gospel was preached to you."

While Peter is believed by many scholars to have had a say in the writing of the gospel according to Mark, the book of 1 Peter really could be said to be the gospel of Jesus Christ according to Peter. Peter, was one of the original 12 disciples and the disciples were also called apostles by Jesus, early in His ministry, which basically means they were to be delegates, appointed by and sent out by Jesus. **(Luke 6:13)** 1 Peter fully encapsulates the gospel of Jesus Christ. In this epistle, epistle meaning in this case a letter written by an apostle, Peter explains what is the gospel of Jesus Christ and what does this all mean, and then what is our responsibility in all of this. Peter really explains the fullness of what is the meaning of life to us. This speaks of how we can have hope for the future, we can have peace in our souls, and where we don't have to look at life as just being a bunch of random stuff that just happens and then we die; that we have been purposed to be here by God in this present time and that God has also purposed us to be with Him for all of eternity. Hard to believe at times, no doubt, but as God told Moses, "I AM that I AM" it can also be said of God's purpose in Jesus Christ that, it is what it is, or more respectfully and God-honoring, "He IS that He IS!" As it was revealed to Peter by the Holy Spirit, he proclaimed of Jesus, "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God." **(Matthew 16:16)** While Peter was one of the apostles or delegates who were specifically sent out by Jesus to spread the gospel, or good news of Jesus Christ, it was and is always to be understood that Jesus alone IS "THE Apostle and High Priest of our confession." **(Hebrews 3:1)** After all, man's testimony may have merit, but the gospel of Jesus Christ is not man's testimony but God's testimony, which is far greater. **(1 John 5:9)** Peter, like most of us, went through his phases of thinking he had it all figured out and in thinking he would never forsake Jesus. In the three years of walking with Jesus, it could be said that Peter had an inflated sense of self. It took Peter a considerable amount of time to come to the realization that it is not in our own virtue, or moral strength, or tenacity of mind that gets us to where God is leading us, but in not only knowing Jesus, that as He is "the "Christ, the Son of the living God" and that He is "THE Apostle and High Priest of our confession", but that it is in Christ alone that we are going to get to where God is calling us. In knowing Jesus I mean to KNOW Him. How do we get to know someone? We spend time with them. Right?

Peter was with Jesus from the very beginning of His ministry. He spent 3 years or so with Jesus, listening to Jesus and watching Jesus in all of His ministry. When John the Baptist was imprisoned and having doubts he sent a messenger to Jesus to ask Him if were the One, that is the Christ, the Messiah, the Anointed One of God. "Jesus answered and said to them, **"Go and tell John the things which you hear and see: The blind see and the lame walk; the lepers are cleansed and the deaf hear; the dead are raised up and the poor have the gospel preached to them."** **(Matthew 11:4-5)** How awesome would that

have been to not only witness Jesus in His ministry but to have fellowship with Him for those three years? Well guess what? We can be witnesses to the great things of God in Christ Jesus, and we can have fellowship with Him. Just prior to Jesus calling Peter to be His disciple, Jesus is said to have entered Simon's boat, after they had an unsuccessful fishing trip. Jesus did a little preaching from the boat to the folks on the land and then told Peter to then launch out to the deep, to which they caught so many fish that Peter had to get help from the other boat that was nearby. There's a point to me mentioning that story. We'll revisit that later but where this is going is that with regards to the kingdom of God, you and I, and Peter too, can not and could not do anything outside of Jesus Christ.

Our passage of Scripture starts off with "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ." He alone is God Almighty, the Creator of the heavens and the earth. "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things were made through Him, and without Him nothing was made that was made. **In Him was life, and the life was the light of men.**" (John 1:1-4) "And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth." (John 1:14) In the beginning there was God the Father and the Word of God, the only begotten Son of God. They were in the beginning when God created the heavens and the earth and "Then God said, "Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth." (Genesis 1:26) When we look at where we are today, or really look at any time in history, it truly is all the same, to where there's God Almighty and then there's His creation that is a fallen creation, from the time of the first sin in the Garden of Eden with Adam and Eve to where we are today. Yes, this world is the stark expression of the sin of man and the effects of sin on the world. So then, how can God be blessed as Peter says, "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ"? It is in the second part of his sentence that we find the blessing of God and for God, "according to **His abundant mercy** has begotten us again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled and that does not fade away, reserved in heaven **FOR YOU, who are kept by the power of God** through faith for salvation ready to be revealed in the last time." God is blessed in blessing us. Or in looking at it as being of the very character of God, HE IS (a blessing) that HE IS (blessed).

Many times it is pointed out by scoffers and unbelievers of how much God was and is a God of wrath, primarily by looking at how God operated in the Old Testament but also, as crazy as it seems to me, in the New Testament, to where those scoffers accuse God of saying

"if God really loved us there wouldn't be all this pain and suffering in this world." Yet Peter breaks down their argument right away by speaking of the great mercy of God by having His only begotten Son Jesus to die on a cross for our sins. After all, it's the sin of mankind that has brought about the conditions we see in the world today. God raised Jesus from the dead so that He conquered death and then offers to us that same victory in Christ Jesus. As Jesus exclaimed, "For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life. For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved." (John 3:16-17) As it was with God's people in the Old Testament period, it is with us even today. We were created by God for His purpose and pleasure and we are called to be His people. As God spoke through the prophet Jeremiah to Israel, He says to us, "If you will return, O Israel," says the Lord, "Return to Me; And if you will put away your abominations out of My sight, then you shall not be moved. And you shall swear, 'The Lord lives,' in truth, in judgment, and in righteousness; The nations shall bless themselves in Him, and in Him they shall glory." (Jeremiah 4:1-2) In the perfect character of God, He IS a blessing, through His gift of salvation in Jesus Christ, but if we reject His mercies and grace, that is His blessings, HE IS also a God of judgment and wrath. Suffice it to say though that God IS perfect in all of His ways.

God told the Israelites that in Him they shall glory. Now we are told that in Christ, we shall glory. "But of Him [God] you are in Christ Jesus, who became for us wisdom from God—and righteousness and sanctification and redemption— that, as it is written, "He who glories, let him glory in the Lord." (1 Corinthians 1:30-31) In Christ Jesus we are "kept by the power of God through faith." It is in Christ we have wisdom from God and Righteousness from God, and Sanctification from God, and Redemption from God. Then also, in Christ Jesus we have glory in the Lord. We partake of God's perfection and His splendor. We begin drawing from His divine attributes and it becomes us. It is a marvelous mystery and revelation to us that in Christ we have God working His glory in us. Another way of saying that is that God is sharing with us His glory.

Yet there is always a need to have a clear distinction between Him being God Almighty and that we are His creation that are His blessing and glory. We are becoming and one day will be perfected as extensions of God's blessing and glory! We live in an awesome time, believe it or not. The prophets spoke of what would come, that is Jesus the Christ but He has been revealed to us! The angels are said to have wondered also as to how it would all come about. Here we are today with the revelation of the gospel of Jesus Christ that has been revealed to us.

Then Peter says, "Though now you do not see Him, yet believing, you rejoice with joy inexpressible and **full of glory**, receiving the end of your faith—the salvation of your souls." We are purposed by God in Jesus Christ to be in God's glory, to be full of His glory! Peter then goes on to say that the prophets that spoke of God's future plans of salvation through the Christ also said of how Christ would also suffer and that the glories would then follow. God is calling us, by faith, into His glory through Jesus Christ. But just as Jesus had to suffer in His time here on this earth in the flesh, we too must endure for a season. Yes, we have to suffer, Jesus had to suffer, and God alone knows how much He has had to suffer in watching and putting up with all of the sins of man throughout the centuries and millenia (plural of millenium). With God having to allow free will, even to His angels on some level, since Satan and his followers rebelled against God, and then with man, to which we know that we "all have sinned [against God] and fall short of His glory." (**Romans 3:23**) Then we also know that, the bad news is "the wages of sin is death", but the good news is "the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord." (**Romans 6:23**)

Not only does God promise us eternal life in Jesus Christ but He also works in us His glory, through Christ Jesus, that will fully revealed at the end of our faith, at the end of our present lifetime, and He also works in us His Wisdom, and Righteousness, and Sanctification, and then His Redemption. How can we not glory in the Lord? If we cheat a bit and look beyond our passage of Scripture for today we get that edifying and humbling word from Peter saying, " But you are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people, that you may proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light; who once were not a people but are now the people of God, who had not obtained mercy but now have obtained mercy." (**1 Peter 2:9-10**) We are called out out this world that is full of sin and that is passing away and into the marvelous light and glory of God. What may sound like the command of a tyrant kind of god that tells us to be holy as he is holy is really God saying that by His great mercy and love for us that He is calling us out of this cesspool of living in sin so that we can dwell in His glory, His light, and His Holiness! "But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us." (**Romans 5:8**) There is not a greater love than that. God has stacked the deck, so to speak, in our favor so that we can be partakers in His Blessing, of who He is, in Christ Jesus.

There are multitudes of people who are have lived in the same faith that we are called to, who have already received their reward. Peter was an eyewitness to all of the things that Jesus did, the miracles, the sacrifice and suffering that He went through to accomplish His Father's goal, and now we are called to believe on Jesus also, to keep looking to Him for He IS our blessing from God. "Therefore we

also, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which so easily ensnares us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God." (**Hebrews 12:1-2**) Then our reward is in the "receiving the end of your faith—the salvation of your souls."

One may say, "I can't do it, I've tried to be a Christian, I've tried to be a good person but I can't do it!" I've said it before and I'll say it again. No you can't! I can't do it and you can't do it! But in Christ we can. The answer is in what Peter says at the end of this chapter. "He [Christ] indeed was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you who through Him believe in God, who raised Him from the dead and gave Him glory, so that your faith and hope are in God. Since you have purified your souls in **obeying the truth through the Spirit** in sincere love of the brethren, love one another fervently with a pure heart, having been born again, not of corruptible seed but incorruptible, through the word of God which lives and abides forever, because "All flesh is as grass, And all the glory of man as the flower of the grass. The grass withers, and its flower falls away, But the word of the Lord endures forever." Now this is the word which by the gospel was preached to you."

Peter says that when you are born again THEN you begin "obeying the truth **through the Spirit**." Jesus also said, "Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." (**John 3:3**) what is that, being born again? Jesus followed up by saying, "Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God." (**John 3:5**) The Holy Spirit leads us to believe on Jesus as the Christ and then to receive the Holy Spirit, that is, the Spirit of Christ. "But as many as received Him [Christ], to them He gave the right to become children of God, to those who believe in His name." (**John 1:12**) Then we are led by the Holy Spirit IN His Wisdom, Righteousness, Sanctification, and then His final reward is Redemption in Christ Jesus where we will be joint-heirs with Jesus and we will reign with Him for all of eternity.

What that is saying is that neither you nor I can save ourselves, only God can save us, that means from the beginning of our faith to our last breaths on earth. Only Jesus can save us. That is why it is said that Christianity is our having a relationship with God, with Jesus. He is the One who calls us, reveals His truth to us, and then saves us, from the beginning of our faith to the end of our faith. When we see God, after this lifetime, we are no longer living by faith, but we will be perfected in Christ Jesus. As it is written,

"Beloved, now we are children of God; and it has not yet been revealed what we shall be, but we know that when He is revealed [Jesus], we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is." (1 **John 3:2**)

Earlier, I mentioned that at the beginning of Jesus's ministry He had told Peter to try once again, after failing at catching any fish that day, to cast His net out one more time. He then had so many fish that he needed help hauling it all in. Well the same thing happened again with Peter, after he abandoned Jesus during His trial and crucifixion. Peter had claimed, prior to Jesus being arrested and then crucified, that "even if all are made to stumble, yet I will not be." (**Mark 14:29**) That is where Jesus said in the next verse, "Assuredly, I say to you that today, even this night, before the rooster crows twice, you will deny Me three times." Peter has taken a lot of criticism over time for denying Christ three times. But he had to learn a most valuable lesson. After Jesus had risen from the grave He later appeared to Peter and some of the other disciples on the shore of Galilee. Once again, they had been fishing all night and had caught nothing. Jesus had them cast the net one more time and they did and were not even able to pull the net up it was so full. Peter learned a most valuable lesson as Jesus talked with Him on the shore. Peter had been humbled by his denying Christ three times but he had to learn to depend on Christ. "Not by might nor by power, but by My Spirit," Says the Lord of hosts." (**Zechariah 4:6**)

Once again, Jesus is our Wisdom, our Righteousness, our Sanctification, and our Redemption. "And he who glories, let him glory in the Lord." "The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God, and if children, then heirs—heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ, if indeed we suffer with Him, that we may also be **glorified together**." (**Romans 8:16-17**) We cannot please God and earn our salvation, regardless of what all the other religions tries to tell us. It is only in Christ Jesus! "He who has the Son has life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have life." (1 **John 5:12**) "Therefore if the Son makes you free, you shall be free indeed." (**John 8:36**)

"Thus says the Lord: "Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom, Let not the mighty man glory in his might, nor let the rich man glory in his riches; But let him who glories glory in this, that he understands and knows Me, that I am the Lord, exercising lovingkindness, judgment, and righteousness in the earth. for in these I delight," says the Lord." (**Jeremiah 9:23-24**) "Let him[her] who glories, glory in the Lord."

For someone today that journey can begin right now in officially acknowledging their need for salvation in Christ Jesus. For others, it may be time to confess before God that they need to get back on the right track in obeying and following God's calling. Let today be your day of salvation and that all who are here today will not leave without getting their hearts right with God.

Heavenly Father,  
I confess that I have sinned against You.  
I ask that You forgive me of my sins.  
I believe that Jesus died on the cross for my sins,  
I confess with my mouth that Jesus is my Lord,  
and I believe in my heart that You raised Jesus from the dead,  
so that I can have forgiveness of sins,  
and be reconciled to You, God, My Father.  
I now commit to You, that I will repent of my sins,  
and live in the newness of life,  
being led by Your Holy Spirit,  
all this I pray, in Christ Jesus, my Savior and Lord. Thank You Lord!