

Easter 2021

Our Living Hope 1 Peter 1:3

Good morning and welcome to Easter Sunday! I'm so excited that we are meeting in person this year, I sure missed being together last year. Hey, I'm also glad to have those of you watching online!

As we gather this morning, I want you to **think about the word HOPE!**

Webster defines hope as... to cherish a desire with anticipation; to want something to happen or be true; to expect with confidence.

Hope is a **powerful word**. In his book, **The Hope Quotient**, **Ray Johnson** shares about a **psychologist** who built his career around working with deeply **wounded married couples** and saw **remarkable success** in getting those warring couples to turn the corner toward a healthy relationship.

Here's the **psychologist's words** on why he saw such great success...

"I just try to get 10 percent improvement, he said. When couples get that 10 percent improvement, they get hope. And when someone gets hope, anything is possible."¹

Hope is powerful! Do you need hope this morning? We all do, because we are living in uncertain times.

Let me remind you of the **hope we have in Jesus this morning**.

The **Apostle Peter** wrote his first letter to believers who were **experiencing persecution and suffering**. He wrote to encourage them to **"hang in there"** and not lose hope. A message we need to hear this morning in these trying days.

Peter opens his letter with a **typical New Testament greeting**...he identifies himself, his audience and then gives a word of blessing.

¹ Ray Johnston, *The Hope Quotient*, Thomas Nelson, 2014, page 13.

In those two short verses he reminds them of their **redemption in Christ**, He says they are the *“elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, in sanctification of the Spirit, for obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ.”*

Peter then writes...

1 Peter 1:3–5 (NKJV) — 3 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, 4 to an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled and that does not fade away, reserved in heaven for you, 5 who are kept by the power of God through faith for salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.

These verses are considered a **hymn of doxology**...Peter writes these words to encourage his readers in the midst of their troubled times. We learn **three things from this passage that give us hope**.

1. The Hope of Our Salvation, 3

1 Peter 1:3 (NKJV) — 3 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,

As we think about our salvation this morning, we must begin with a word of **praise and thanksgiving to our Great God** and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ who saved us by His mercy.

Mercy is God's **favor shown toward sinners who are trapped in a state of sinfulness and condemnation**.

As sinners we all **deserve divine wrath** and **eternal separation** from Him. We have **nothing to offer** Him that would merit His forgiveness and acceptance of us. He will not accept our **efforts, our works, our sacrifices, not even our religious rituals**. We are truly hopeless without His divine action.

But being full of mercy, God **would turn our misery into glory**. Why would He do such a thing? Paul gives us **His motivation**...

Ephesians 2:4–5 (NKJV) — 4 But God, who is rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, 5 even when we were dead in trespasses, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved),

He was motivated by His “great love” for us...PRAISE GOD!!!!

Peter says that God’s mercy “*has begotten us again*”...we are **born again**.
Jesus told Nicodemus in...

John 3:3 (NKJV) — 3 “Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.”

How are we born again? Peter gives us the answer,

“through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead”

The Lord Jesus died on the cross of Calvary for our sins. Through His shed blood He would make **atonement (payment)** for our sin debt. God the Father will accept nothing else.

If Jesus **never rose** from the dead, then His death of the cross meant nothing, then we are still **hopeless and without mercy**. But Jesus did rise! He is alive! And we are redeemed!

Jesus told Martha...

John 11:25–26 (NKJV) — 25 “I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in Me, though he may die, he shall live. 26 And whoever lives and believes in Me shall never die. Do you believe this?”

We live because HE LIVES!!!! This is our LIVING HOPE!!!!

But we also have,

2. The Hope of Our Inheritance, 4

1 Peter 1:4 (NKJV) — 4 to an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled and that does not fade away, reserved in heaven for you,

The **Greek word used for “inheritance”** here was used in the Greek version of the Old Testament to refer to the nation of **Israel dividing up the Promised Land** as was promised to each tribe, they each received their inheritance.

Our Promised Land is not earthly, it is heavenly. One day brothers and sisters we will **cross the Jordan** and enter into our **eternal estate**, whether by death or rapture that day is a coming. And we will take possession of what has been promised us in Christ Jesus.

Peter then describes our inheritance...

- **Our Inheritance is Incorruptible**

Unlike an earthly inheritance we can receive our heavenly inheritance is not subject to decay or ruin. You can inherit earthly things, but they will soon perish but our heavenly inheritance will remain.

- **Our Inheritance is undefiled**

Our heavenly inheritance is not stained by evil or corrupt. It is perfect!

- **Our Inheritance is Imperishable**

Everything in this world is perishing, but our eternal inheritance will never fade away.

- **Our Inheritance is Reserved**

We all know what it means to have a reservation at a restaurant. Peter says we have a reservation with our heavenly inheritance. Eternity is waiting on us!

Since our inheritance is heavenly, let us follow Paul’s exhortation...

Colossians 3:1–2 (NKJV) — 1 If then you were raised with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ is, sitting at the right hand of God. 2 Set your mind on things above, not on things on the earth.

We have seen...

- The Our Hope of Salvation
- The Our Hope of Inheritance

Now let's look at...

3. The Hope of Our Security, 5

1 Peter 1:5 (NKJV) — 5 who are kept by the power of God through faith for salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.

Eternal security is a **wonderful truth** taught in scripture to help us understand that we **cannot lose our salvation**. The Lord Jesus taught this truth...

John 10:28–29 (NKJV) — 28 And I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; neither shall anyone snatch them out of My hand. 29 My Father, who has given them to Me, is greater than all; and no one is able to snatch them out of My Father's hand.

Before **I press on**, I want to say something very important and needful. I have been burdened over the past few years by the **lack of understanding of this precious doctrine**.

There are some who hold that a person can make a profession of faith in Christ, be **supposedly saved** and then **live contrary** to the scripture and still be saved. I **don't find** this truth anywhere in the bible.

Does this mean that a believer cannot fall into sin for a season? Well of course that could happen and does happen if we are not careful to watch over ourselves.

Does this mean that a believer is perfect? No, as long as we live in this flesh we will sin.

What I'm concerned about is those who continue to live in sin, without any remorse and even get angry if you say anything about their sin and yet expect God to take them to heaven when they die.

I have seen over and over again throughout the years of my ministry. Someone will die who has **not stepped into the church for years**, who **doesn't care about the things of God** and is living in **open sin** before all and yet they say he is a Christian and in heaven.

Let me ask you. **If a husband never stayed at home, didn't care for his wife and lived in open adultery, would we say when he died, he was a good husband? I don't think so.**

Read the bible and see if that lines up...it doesn't. A saved life is a changed life because the Holy Spirit regenerates us and gives us new desires – Godly desires.

Paul would say...

Romans 6:1–2 (NKJV) – 1 What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound? 2 Certainly not! How shall we who died to sin live any longer in it?

Ok, I'm climbing off my soap box now. Peter says our eternal security is...

- **Kept by God's Power**

Our God is **omnipotent** = all powerful and He keeps us secure by His strength. Paul said...

Philippians 1:6 (NKJV) – 6 being confident of this very thing, that He who has begun a good work in you will complete it until the day of Jesus Christ;

- **Through Faith**

We live by faith and are **sustained** by faith. John speaks to the nature of our faith in...

1 John 5:11–13 (NKJV) – 11 And this is the testimony: that God has given us eternal life, and this life is in His Son. 12 He who has the Son has life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have life. 13 These things I have written to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, that you may know that you have eternal life, and that you may continue to believe in the name of the Son of God.

Peter finishes this section by reminding that heaven is waiting for us. **One day we will see Glory Land!**

The Hope of the Resurrection is...

The Hope of Our Salvation

The Hope of Our Inheritance

The Hope of Our Security

CONCLUSION:

1. Have you been born again?
2. Are you thankful this morning?