**1 Peter: Hearts of Gratitude for His Eternal Gift, Pt 2**

*1 Peter 1:3-5*

**Context**

**1 Peter 1:3-5**—*Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who 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,****4****to obtain an inheritance which is imperishable and undefiled and will not fade away, reserved in heaven for you,****5****who are protected by the power of God through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.*

These brothers and sisters were facing severe persecution. As such, they needed help. Peter is writing them telling them that the riches of their salvation could give them joy and victory even in these difficult circumstances. They might be rejected by the world, but they are chosen of God.

As recipients of the wonders of being chosen of God unto salvation, Peter says we should bless God. That ought to be the ongoing expression for every believer who genuinely knows the nature and work God has afforded His own. We have an inheritance that is reserved and cannot in any way be removed or diminished.

In this portion of scripture, Peter “proceeds to name and describe some of the glories of our great salvation. These Christians, beset with troubles, had not yet learned that their blessings far outweighed their distresses. They were sighing when they should have been singing!”[[1]](#footnote-2)

**Features of the Believer’s Inheritance**

1. **We bless the One who gives it**

**1 Peter 1:3a***—Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ*

1. It is necessary to bless God
   1. We bless God because He is the source of all spiritual blessings and our inheritance
   2. He is worthy of all our praise—as the One True God

**Isaiah 46:9-10**—“*Remember the former things long past, For I am God, and there is no other; I am God, and there is no one like Me,* ***10****Declaring the end from the beginning, And from ancient times things which have not been done, Saying, ‘My purpose will be established, And I will accomplish all My good pleasure’”*

1. We bless the incarnate God—the One who revealed the True God

**Hebrews 1:3**—*And He is the radiance of His glory and the exact representation of His nature, and upholds all things by the word of His power. When He had made purification of sins, He sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high*

1. *The God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ*
   1. In calling God His Father, Jesus was claiming the same nature as God

**John 10:30***—“I and the Father are one.”*

**John 14:9***—Jesus \*said to him, “Have I been so long with you, and yet you have not come to know Me, Philip? He who has seen Me has seen the Father; how can you say, ‘Show us the Father’?* (cf. vv **8, 10-13**)

* 1. One cannot know the Father without knowing the Son

**John 14:6-7**—*Jesus \*said to him, “I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father but through Me.* ***7****If you had known Me, you would have known My Father also; from now on you know Him, and have seen Him.”*

* 1. Scripture primarily identifies God the Father of the Lord Jesus Christ

(**Matt 7:21; 10:32, 11:25-27; 16:27; 25:34; 26:39,** Et al**.**)

* + 1. God is also the Father of all believers (**Matthew 5:16, 45, 48; 6:1, 9, 10:20;** Et al.)
    2. The reason He is the Father of all believers is that we are in Christ. And if we are in the Son, we are in the Father
  1. Peter uses a “concentrated confession”[[2]](#footnote-3) in using Christ’s full name
     1. *Lord* identifies Him as sovereign Ruler
     2. *Jesus* as incarnate Son
     3. *Christ* as anointed Messiah-King[[3]](#footnote-4)
  2. Peter also uses the pronoun “our” to personalize Him
     1. The *Lord* of the Universe belongs to all believers
     2. *Jesus* who lived, died, and rose again for believers providing our atonement
     3. *Christ,* the Messiah who God anointed to be our eternal King will grant to His elect a glorious inheritance[[4]](#footnote-5)

1. **We recognize why He gives it**

**1 Peter 1:3b***—…who according to His great mercy*

1. It is given because of who He is—a merciful God
2. It is according to *His great mercy*

**Ephesians 2:4-6***—But God, being rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us,****5****even when we were dead in our transgressions, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved),****6****and raised us up with Him, and seated us with Him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus*

**Titus 3:5***—He saved us, not on the basis of deeds which we have done in righteousness, but according to His mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewing by the Holy Spirit,*

**Psalm 118*:3****—Oh let the house of Aaron say, “His lovingkindness is everlasting.”*

*Great*—abundant, much

1. Mercy (*eleos)*—kindness or good will towards the miserable and the afflicted, joined with a desire to help them[[5]](#footnote-6)
   1. The focus is on the sinner’s miserable, pitiful condition
   2. It’s not the same as grace
   3. Grace concerns one’s guilt, which caused that condition requiring mercy
   4. 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)[[6]](#footnote-7)

**Romans 3:24***—being justified as a gift by His grace through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus*

* 1. Our sinful condition is dead in our trespasses and sins

***Ephesians 2:1-3****—And you were dead in your trespasses and sins,****2****in which you formerly walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, of the spirit that is now working in the sons of disobedience*

* 1. Man’s desperate need for mercy and God’s remedy found in the person and work of Christ

1. Except for His mercy, we would no capacity to believe

**Exodus 34:6**—*Then the Lord passed by in front of him and proclaimed, “The Lord, the Lord God, compassionate and gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in lovingkindness and truth”*

**Lamentations 3:22-23**—*The Lord’s lovingkindnesses indeed never cease, For His compassions never fail.* ***23****They are new every morning; Great is Your faithfulness.*

1. Mercy is not earned; it is freely given

**Ephesians 2:8-9**—*For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God;****9****not as a result of works, so that no one may boast.*

1. **We recognize how He gives it**

**1 Peter 1:3c***—…has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead,*

1. The great mercy of God brought about a change in our nature (born again)
2. The natural man has no capacity to change his nature; A dead man can do nothing

**Jeremiah 13:23**—*Can the Ethiopian change his skin Or the leopard his spots? Then you also can do good Who are accustomed to doing evil.*

1. God does the work of regeneration by causing us, through the sanctifying work of the Spirit, to be born again

**John 3:5-6**—*Jesus answered, “Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.****6****That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.*

**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.*

**2:2***—like newborn babies, long for the pure milk of the word, so that by it you may grow in respect to salvation,*

1. The inheritance from God comes only to those who experience the new birth

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

**James 1:18**—*In the exercise of His will He brought us forth by the word of truth, so that we would be a kind of first fruits among His creatures.*

1. *A living hope—*there is incredible hope for the believer because of the new birth, not so for the unbelieve
   1. The unbeliever has only dying hope
   2. Believers have a living undying hope

**Colossians 1:*27****—to whom God willed to make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory.*

* 1. The fulfillment of the hope is in our eternal dwelling

**2 Peter 3:11-13***—Since all these things are to be destroyed in this way, what sort of people ought you to be in holy conduct and godliness,****12****looking for and hastening the coming of the day of God, because of which the heavens will be destroyed by burning, and the elements will melt with intense heat!****13****But according to His promise we are looking for new heavens and a new earth, in which righteousness dwells.*

**Galatians 5:5***—For we through the Spirit, by faith, are waiting for the hope of righteousness.*

1. The hope we have is only possible because of *the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead*

**John 11:25-26***—Jesus said to her, “I am the resurrection and the life; he who believes in Me will live even if he dies,****26****and everyone who lives and believes in Me will never die. Do you believe this?”*

1. Without a resurrection, our faith is worthless

**1 Corinthians 15:17, 19***—and if Christ has not been raised, your faith is worthless; you are still in your sins. …* ***19****If we have hoped in Christ in this life only, we are of all men most to be pitied.*

1. **We recognize what He gives**

**1 Peter 1:4a***—…to obtain an inheritance which is imperishable and undefiled and will not fade away*

1. He gives us an Inheritance
   1. The inheritance is of significant importance in the text
   2. Something that is or may be inherited (property or wealth) acquisition of a possession, condition, or trait from past generations (genetic qualities)
2. The word has roots into what the Israelites received as their inheritance when the land of Canaan was allotted to the tribes of Israel
   1. God had allotted the portions and gave them an inheritance

**Numbers 26:52-56**—*Then the Lord spoke to Moses, saying,****53****“Among these the land shall be divided for an inheritance according to the number of names.****54****To the larger group you shall increase their inheritance, and to the smaller group you shall diminish their inheritance; each shall be given their inheritance according to those who were numbered of them.****55****But the land shall be divided by lot. They shall receive their inheritance according to the names of the tribes of their fathers.****56****According to the selection by lot, their inheritance shall be divided between the larger and the smaller groups.”*

* 1. For the tribe of Levi, God was their portion (**Num 18:20-24**)
  2. In the same way that the Israelites received an earthly inheritance, the church receives a spiritual inheritance in heaven

**Ephesians 1:11**—*also we have obtained an inheritance, having been predestined according to His purpose who works all things after the counsel of His will*

**Colossians 1:12***—…giving thanks to the Father, who has qualified us to share in the inheritance of the saints in Light.*

1. The inheritance is ours and secured, the eternal blessing is already ours, until then we are being matured into Christlikeness

[therefore] **Colossians 3:2-3**—*Set your mind on the things above, not on the things that are on earth.****3****For you have died and your life is hidden with Christ in God.****4****When Christ, who is our life, is revealed, then you also will be revealed with Him in glory.*

1. Peter then gives three characteristics of the inheritance:
   1. *Imperishable*—uncorrupted, not liable to corruption or decay[[7]](#footnote-8)
      1. Note the contrast between the inheritance of Israel in land vs the inheritance of the church
      2. They lost their inheritance because of their disobedience
      3. For the NT believer, it can never be lost
   2. *Undefiled*—not defiled or unsoiled; unstained or unpolluted
      1. The noetic effect of sin has affected all things

**Romans 8:20-22**—*For the creation was subjected to futility, not willingly, but because of Him who subjected it, in hope****21****that the creation itself also will be set free from its slavery to corruption into the freedom of the glory of the children of God.*

**1 John 5:19***—We know that we are of God, and that the whole world lies in the power of the evil one.*

* + 1. In contrast to what the believer has in Christ

**Philippians 3:7-9**—*But whatever things were gain to me, those things I have counted as loss for the sake of Christ.****8****More than that, I count all things to be loss in view of the surpassing value of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them but rubbish so that I may gain Christ,****9****and may be found in Him, not having a righteousness of my own derived from the Law, but that which is through faith in Christ, the righteousness which comes from God on the basis of faith,*

* 1. *Will not fade away*—unfading; the idea is that it will not lose its magnificence

**Luke 13:33**—*Sell your possessions and give to charity; make yourselves money belts which do not wear out, an unfailing treasure in heaven, where no thief comes near nor moth destroys.*

**Revelation 21:22, 27**—*I saw no temple in it, for the Lord God the Almighty and the Lamb are its temple. …* ***27****and 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.*

**2 Peter 5:4**—*And when the Chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the unfading crown of glory.*

1. **We recognize just how He reserves and protects it**

***1 Peter 1:4b-5****—****…****reserved in heaven for you,****5****who are protected by the power of God through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.*

1. *Reserved in heaven for you*
   1. *“Reserved”*(used 75x)—keep (57x), reserve (8x), observe (4x), watch (2x), preserve (2x), keeper (1x), hold fast (1x)[[8]](#footnote-9)
   2. It is guarded or watched over; to guard (from loss or injury, properly, by keeping the eye upon)[[9]](#footnote-10)
   3. Carefully guarded *in heaven*

**Matthew 6:19-21***—“Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy, and where thieves break in and steal.****20****But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys, and where thieves do not break in or steal;****21****for where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.”*

* 1. It is not on earth, but is reserved in heaven[[10]](#footnote-11)
  2. It is not present, but future
  3. Similarly, His elect are written in heaven

**Luke 10:20***—Nevertheless do not rejoice in this, that the spirits are subject to you, but rejoice that your names are recorded in heaven.*

**Philippians 3:*20****—For our citizenship is in heaven, from which also we eagerly wait for a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ;*

**Revelation 3:5***—He who overcomes will thus be clothed in white garments; and I will not erase his name from the book of life, and I will confess his name before My Father and before His angels.*

**Revelation 20:12, 15***—And I saw the dead, the great and the small, standing before the throne, and books were opened; and another book was opened, which is the book of life; and the dead were judged from the things which were written in the books, according to their deeds….****15****And if anyone’s name was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire.*

1. *Protected by the power of God*
   1. All power and all authority belongs to God alone

**Psalm 62:11**—*Once God has spoken; Twice I have heard this: That power belongs to God*

**1 Corinthians 1:24**—*but to those who are the called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God.*

**2:5**—*so that your faith would not rest on the wisdom of men, but on the power of God.*

* 1. He is omnipotent

**Jude 24***—Now to Him who is able to keep you from stumbling, and to make you stand in the presence of His glory blameless with great joy,*

**Romans 8:31-34***—What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who is against us?****32****He who did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him over for us all, how will He not also with Him freely give us all things?****33****Who will bring a charge against God’s elect? God is the one who justifies;****34****who is the one who condemns?*

**John 10:28-19***—and I give eternal life to them, and they will never perish; and no one will 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 the Father’s hand.*

1. The responsibility of the believer is to live *through faith*

**John 8:31***—So Jesus was saying to those Jews who had believed Him, “If you continue in My word, then you are truly disciples of Mine”*

**Colossians 1:21-23**—*And although you were formerly alienated and hostile in mind, engaged in evil deeds,****22****yet He has now reconciled you in His fleshly body through death, in order to present you before Him holy and blameless and beyond reproach—****23****if indeed you continue in the faith firmly established and steadfast, and not moved away from the hope of the gospel that you have heard, which was proclaimed in all creation under heaven, and of which I, Paul, was made a minister.*

**1 John 5:4, 11-13**—*For whatever is born of God overcomes the world; and this is the victory that has overcome the world—our faith….* ***11****And the testimony is this, that God has given us eternal life, and this life is in His Son.****12****He who has the Son has the life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have the life.* ***13****These things I have written to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, so that you may know that you have eternal life.*

1. The security of our salvation looks to the future*—a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time*
   1. *Salvation—means* deliverance, preservation, safety, rescue[[11]](#footnote-12)
   2. The threefold chronology for salvation
      1. The past aspect of salvation is **justification** (**Rom 10:9-10; 14-17**)
      2. The present aspect of salvation is **sanctification** (delivered from the power of sin, **1 Jn 1:9**)
      3. The future aspect of salvation is **glorification** (**Rom 13:11**)[[12]](#footnote-13)
   3. At death, the believer is ushered into the presence of God (**2 Cor 5:8**) and delivered fully from the presence of sin (**Heb 9:28**) where they enter into their inheritance
2. The inheritance is God Himself

**Joshua 13:33**—*But to the tribe of Levi, Moses did not give an inheritance; the Lord, the God of Israel, is their inheritance, as He had promised to them.*

**1 Peter 2:9**—*But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for God’s own possession, so that you may proclaim the excellencies of Him who has called you out of darkness into His marvelous light*

**Psalm 16:5**—*The Lord is the portion of my inheritance and my cup; You support my lot.*

**Romans 8:16-17***—The Spirit Himself testifies with our spirit that we are children of God,****17****and if children, heirs also, heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ, if indeed we suffer with Him so that we may also be glorified with Him.*

**Conclusion**

We cannot fully fathom the depths of the riches of His kindness that is lavished on us who by faith believe. God, as a gracious act of His mercy, gives it to us when He regenerates us through the new birth. It is eternally secure and kept in heaven ready to be revealed in the last time.

**1 Corinthians 2:9**—but just as it is written, “Things which eye has not seen and ear has not heard, And *which* have not entered the heart of man, All that God has prepared for those who love Him.”

**Homework:** Memorize **1 Peter 1:1-9**

**Source**

Most of the message and notes come from:

John MacArthur, *The MacArthur New Testament Commentary, 1 Peter, pp 29-39*

Richard W. DeHaan*, Good News for Bad Times: 1 Peter, pp 20-25*

R.C.H. Lenski, *The Interpretation of I and II Epistles of Peter, the three Epistles of John, and the Epistle of Jude, pp 29-34*

Jerome H Smith*, The New Treasure of Scripture Knowledge, p1318*

John MacArthur, *Adoring God for Our Eternal Inheritance, Part 2, 1 Peter 1:4-5*, May 30, 1988, [www.gty.org](http://www.gty.org)

1. Richard De Haan, *Good News for Bad Times: 1 Peter*, p20. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
2. R.C.H. Lenski, The Interpretation of I and II Epistles of Peter, The three Epistles of John, and the Epistle of Jude, p. 30 [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
3. John MacArthur, *The MacArthur New Testament Commentary, 1 Peter,* p31 [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
4. Ibid [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
5. Strong’s Lexicon: G1656 [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
6. MacArthur, p33 [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
7. Strong’s G862 [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
8. [www.blueletterbible.com](http://www.blueletterbible.com) [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
9. Ibid. [↑](#footnote-ref-10)
10. The New Treasury of Scripture Knowledge, 1318 [↑](#footnote-ref-11)
11. Ibid. [↑](#footnote-ref-12)
12. MacArthur, 37. [↑](#footnote-ref-13)