



KING'S CHAPEL

Daily Devotional - 1 Peter Study

Week 1 - Day 2

Approaching God

Read Psalm 105:5-11

Remember the wonders he has done, his miracles, and the judgments he pronounced, you his servants, the descendants of Abraham, his chosen ones, the children of Jacob. He is the LORD our God; his judgments are in all the earth. He remembers his covenant forever, the promise he made, for a thousand generations, the covenant he made with Abraham, the oath he swore to Isaac. He confirmed it to Jacob as a decree, to Israel as an everlasting covenant: "To you I will give the land of Canaan as the portion you will inherit."

In today's passage in 1 Peter, the "hope" of vs. 3 is described partly as an inheritance in vs. 4, which in the OT typically describes the Promised Land and Israel's place in it. But the OT inheritance points ahead to an even greater inheritance, reserved in heaven for the people of the new covenant. As you read through Psalm 105, take a minute to reflect on what it would've been like to receive this promise from God. But even land (like Canaan) and the Temple that was built in Jerusalem, could be taken or destroyed. Now consider that nothing can tarnish or extinguish the secure and imperishable inheritance God has for us in Jesus. Take a minute to praise the Lord.

Bible Reading, Study & Meditation - 1 Peter 1:3-9

Start with Engaging the Text: Take a few minutes to highlight, circle, or underline key words.

Significantly, before Peter does anything else, he rises to pronounce a blessing on God (vs. 3). He isn't starting off with difficult circumstances or telling believers how to conduct themselves, instead he calls upon his readers to make a decided and determined prayer of praise. Jewish prayers most often opened with the time honored word: blessed. In particular, "Blessed be God."

1 Peter 1:3-9 - 3 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! According to his great mercy, he has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, **4** to an inheritance that is imperishable, undefiled, and unfading, kept in heaven for you, **5** who by God's power are being guarded through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time. **6** In this you rejoice, though now for a little while, if necessary, you have been grieved by various trials, **7** so that the tested genuineness of your faith--more precious than gold that perishes though it is tested by fire--may be found to result in praise and glory and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ. **8** Though you have not seen him, you love him. Though you do not now see him, you believe in him and rejoice with joy that is inexpressible and filled with glory, **9** obtaining the outcome of your faith, the salvation of your souls.

Daily Study Questions

You may find it helpful to read through the commentary in “Resources for Further Study” at the end of today’s study to answer these questions.

- Along with vs. 1 and 2, what do vs. 3-9 have to say about special identity believers have in Christ? Try to list some of the specific and various things Peter says about our identity
- What do you learn about the importance of faith to God and its significance for us as believers in this passage? How does Peter talk about our faith?
- What is the Christian’s reason for joy according to this passage?

Meditation & Reflection Questions

- Looking back through these questions about our identity in Christ, how might you be tempted to define yourself, or find your identity in something other than in Christ?
- How can embracing this new identity as God’s child help you if and when you struggle with lack of self-worth or with pride?
- In a world dominated by materialism and the accumulation of wealth, how should knowing that we have a future incorruptible inheritance affect a Christian’s view of money and possessions in this life?

Close in Prayer:

Thank God for your new identity in Christ. Ask God to show you any ways in which you are tempted to conform to the disobedience of the world. Pray that you will live in holiness, reflecting the holiness of God.

Resources for Further Study

1 Peter chapter 1 notes

Commentary & Notes on 1 Peter 1:3-9

God is Worthy of Our Praise - How do we respond to the news of such amazing grace in the saving work of the triune God applied to people like us? Praise! At least, that should be our immediate response—not merely to understand the first two verses, but to worship God because of them. **“Blessed be”** (v 3) literally means “to speak a good word about.” We could translate “blessed be” as “be eulogized.” When someone gives a eulogy at a funeral, they are speaking good words about the deceased. When we speak a good word about God, we are praising him or blessing him. It is fitting to speak a good word about God because of who he is, what he has done, and what he is doing. There is no Person who deserves our eulogizing more than “the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ!” The Father and the Son were in intimate relationship before the foundation of the world, and the Son accomplished our salvation when, in obedience to the Father, he came to earth to be made known to the world at the appointed time (1:20). So, God is worthy of our praise because in his grace and mercy he has saved us through the work of his Son, Jesus, and has given us a new life in Christ. “Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ!”

Born Again to a Living Hope - At birth, we are identified genetically, sharing the genetic make-up of our biological parents with all its inherent strengths and weaknesses. But that is not all we inherit. Through our birth parents, we are also identified ethnically. Depending on where you were born, you are likely to have a national identity, usually rewarded with citizenship. We’re also born with a socio-economic identity on the basis of our parents’ socio-economic standing. We derive more from our parents than we often appreciate; we may spend our lives reinforcing that inheritance, or struggling against it, but we are shaped by it our whole lives. Our birth identifies us.

Here, Peter speaks of a new birth that, as we will see, brings with it a new identity and citizenship (2:9). In this birth, God is our Father (1:17), and we are his children (v 14). Peter explains that the Father brings about the “birth” (v 3) of his children (2:2) by the “seed” of the word of God (1:23). This new birth, initiated by God the Father, results in a new life. Imagine what good news this is for people who feel estranged in this world. Regardless of our original birth, those born again by the word of God are born again to a new life with a new identity as God’s sons and daughters. This becomes our deepest identity.

With this new life, we also have a new hope for we have been “born again to a living hope” (v 3). “Hope” in the Bible is not a vague wish (“I hope we have pizza for dinner”)—it is a certain expectation of a future event. In verse 3, Peter grounds our living hope in the resurrection of Jesus Christ. Jesus was mocked, beaten, abused and killed, but he did not remain in the grave. If that were the case, our faith would be in vain, and we would be a hopeless people. Without Jesus’ resurrection we would still be in our sins (1 Corinthians 15:17). But Jesus did in fact rise “from the dead” (1 Peter 1:3). Because of Jesus’ resurrection, we also have the hope of our own resurrection. Death is not the last word. As the likelihood of persecution increases for Christians in the West, we need to arm ourselves with this living hope. Because of this living hope, we no longer need to fear death, much less persecution. The worst persecution can do is to kill us; and through Christ’s resurrection from the dead, we can be sure that we will follow him through death and into life. That is a hope that nothing in this life can extinguish.

An Imperishable Inheritance. Not only are we promised a future resurrection, though; we are also promised a future inheritance. Peter not only tells us that we will live beyond death, but also what kind of life that will be. Throughout his letter, as we’ll see, Peter applies old covenant imagery to the Christians to whom he is writing. It is likely he is doing the same in 1 Peter 1:4 with the word “inheritance.” Like Israel, Peter’s readers are sojourners and exiles in their world (2:11); they are scattered (1:1). But having been incorporated into the people of God on the basis of the new covenant (v 2), and having been born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ, they, like Israel, are promised a future inheritance. Unlike Israel’s inheritance, however, the inheritance of the new covenant people of God is “imperishable, undefiled, and unfading” (v 4). Our promised inheritance is not susceptible to corruption; it is eternal. It will never become defiled or unclean; it will never fade away or lose its unspoiled character.

Our future inheritance will not only cause our worst experiences in this life to become distant memories; it will make even the most exotic places on earth and the finest moments of our lives here pale in comparison. Here, every earthly treasure we value fades and every human pleasure we hope in diminishes with time. Here, even the good that is done is spoiled by our flaws or those of others. Here, all that is not eternal will come to an end. But we look forward to an inheritance which never fades, never becomes defiled, and never perishes. That is some inheritance—and it inspires in us a future-looking hope that allows us to endure even the most oppressive circumstances on earth. Though, spiritually speaking, we are presently homeless in this world, we have the hope of a future homeland, an eternal inheritance that will never lose its glory. We can be certain of our inheritance because it is being “kept in heaven” for us until it is “revealed in the last time.”(vs. 4)

Guarded by His Power - The news of a new life that leads to a living hope and a future inheritance is all well and good, but how can we know that in the face of persecution and temptation we will persevere to the end and reach this life? After all, it is difficult to live in a world that is hostile to Christians. It is challenging to maintain a Christian witness when you are bombarded by insults, ridicule, and abuse. I can only imagine how tempting it would be to deny Christ if my life were in question—thousands of our brothers and sisters don't have to imagine that because it is their reality. A future inheritance is all very well, as long as we get there. How can we know that we will?

The good news, says Peter, is that the God who keeps our inheritance secure in heaven (v 4) is also the God who keeps his children secure on earth during their sojourn “for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time” (v 5). No matter how hard our life on this earth may be, we can cling to the promise that God keeps us. The God who chose us before the foundation of the earth and has caused us to be born again to a living hope “guards” or “protects” us by his power until we obtain our inheritance. The word translated “guarded” in verse 5 is also used in 2 Corinthians 11:32 of the governor “guarding the city of Damascus in order to seize” Paul. To “guard” means “to keep watch over” in order to defend against anything bad that may happen. That is what God promises to do for his children. And yet, we know that God's protection does not mean we will avoid suffering (1 Peter 4:12). So, how does God guard us if Christian suffering is to be expected?

The greatest threat to perseverance is unbelief. If we lose faith, then we will not receive our reward (Hebrews 3:7-19). But Peter promises us that will God guard us “by [his] power ... through faith” (1 Peter 1:5). In other words, while we must continue in faith in order to receive our future salvation, Peter reminds us that no matter how hard life may become, God sustains our faith by his power. When trials come and doubts arise, we are not left to sustain our own faith in our own power. By his power, God guards our faith such that no trial or suffering we may face will cause us to lose it. Here is a glorious promise for every Christian—the God who gave us saving faith as a gift will also sustain and strengthen our faith through suffering until that day when we receive our imperishable, undefiled, unfading inheritance.

God knows what threatens our faith, so he guards us during those trials, sustaining our faith by his power. For Christians, suffering is inevitable, but God promises to watch over us. This is the promise Peter's readers needed to hear as they faced persecution in Asia Minor; this is the promise that we need to hear today as we likely face increasing trouble in the West. Through the resurrection, we can look through any suffering and see our inheritance, readied for us by the God who guards us as he guides us home. Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ!