

1. Learning About Our Future Inheritance

Today, we are beginning a new series of topics from the book of 1 Peter. In these topics, we will see that the Lord used Peter to teach us many lessons about suffering. In these verses, the book of 1 Peter is a very helpful book to teach our physical and spiritual children lessons about the way that Christ teaches us to respond when we suffer for Him. In addition to learning to respond to suffering, this book will also help us learn to explain many other lessons to our children.

In 1 Peter 1:1-2 we read, “Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ, to the pilgrims of the Dispersion in Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia, elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, in sanctification of the Spirit, for obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ: Grace to you and peace be multiplied.” We see that Peter introduces himself as he begins this book. His introduction is very brief and just mentions that he is an apostle of Jesus Christ. The qualifications to be an apostle are given in Acts 1:21-22 where we read, “Therefore, of these men who have accompanied us all the time that the Lord Jesus went in and out among us, beginning from the baptism of John to that day when He was taken up from us, one of these must become a witness with us of His resurrection.” These verses also tell us the primary ministry of the apostles. They were to be witnesses of the resurrection.

Peter also explained to whom he originally wrote this letter. He said that he wrote to the pilgrims of the Dispersion. The word that is translated “pilgrims of the Dispersion” means “*a person that is from a foreign country who is presently living in another land with the people of that land.*” Hebrews 13:13-14 says, “Therefore let us go forth to Him, outside the camp, bearing His reproach. For here we have no continuing city, but we seek the one to come.” As Christians, we understand that this world is not our permanent home. Peter uses that word here to speak about the fact that we as Christians are actually citizens of heaven and are only temporarily living on this earth as strangers in a foreign country. Philippians 3:20 says, “For our citizenship is in heaven, from which we also eagerly wait for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ.” A citizen who loves his country is always eagerly looking forward to the time when he will be in that country permanently. As we grow in our understanding of this fact, it changes our view of this world.

At the time that Peter wrote, he was writing to Christians who were scattered in the following regions: Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia. These regions were all located in the area that is the present country of Turkey. Peter reminded these Christians that the whole Trinity was involved in their lives as Christians. First, Peter said that they were the elect (chosen) according to the foreknowledge of God, the Father. Ephesians 1:4 says, “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.” The Father chose each Christian before the world was ever created.

Second, Peter said that this was done in sanctification of the Spirit. “Sanctification” means “*to set apart or to consecrate*”. At the moment of salvation, all of our sins, past, present and future, were forgiven and blotted out and the righteousness of Christ was placed on us by the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is the One who gives us power as we yield to Him to be obedient to God. Third, our salvation was made possible through the sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ. 1 Peter 2:24 says,

“Who Himself bore our sins in His own body on the tree, that we, having died to sins, might live for righteousness--by whose stripes you were healed.” We are able to live for righteousness because of the fact that the righteousness of Christ is placed on each Christian at the moment of salvation.

Here, we see that God the Father, Son and Holy Spirit worked in unity so that we could experience the grace of God in our lives. Titus 2:11 says, “For the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men.” Christ came so that we could know the grace of God and receive the salvation that has been provided through Christ. Ephesians 2:8-9 says, “For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; *it is* the gift of God, not of works, lest anyone should boast.” When we accept that grace by placing our faith in Christ, it then becomes possible to experience the peace of God in our lives. That peace is described in Philippians 4:7 where we read, “And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.” Peter wanted that peace to be multiplied in the life of every Christian.

Peter went on to describe the future inheritance that is promised to every Christian. 1 Peter 1:3-5 says, “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.” As we think about our future inheritance as Christians, we are reminded first of all of our relationship with God. Once Adam and Eve sinned, most of the people in the Old Testament never felt a close relationship with God.

Here, we are reminded that because of the death and resurrection of Christ, we can call Him Father. Hebrews 4:14-16 says, “Seeing then that we have a great High Priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast *our* confession. For we do not have a High Priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but was in all *points* tempted as *we are*, yet without sin. Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.” As Christians, we can come to the Father with boldness because we come to the Father through Christ. It is through the blood that Christ shed on the cross that we have obtained mercy and grace. In the Old Testament, the blood of animals only covered sin and the people still felt distant from God. In John 1:29 John the Baptist introduced Christ by saying, “The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him, and said, ‘Behold! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!’” Because Christ took our sin away, we can come to the Father with boldness through Christ.

We also see what the abundant mercy of God has done for us. The word that is translated “begotten again” means “*to be born anew or to be born again*”. In fact, that is the way it is translated in the only other place that this word is used in the New Testament. In this same chapter 1 Peter 1:22-23 says, “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.” Here, we see that the fact we have been born again makes it possible for us to love one another fervently

with a pure heart.

We see here that that we have been born anew to a living hope through the resurrection of Christ from the dead. Because Christ rose from the dead, we no longer have to fear death. Titus 2:13 says, “Looking for the blessed hope and glorious appearing of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ.” The world looks at all of the problems around them and is filled with fear. We can look up and look forward to that blessed hope which is the coming of Christ to take us to be with Him forever.

We see that our eternal inheritance is described in three ways. First, our inheritance is incorruptible. This means that our inheritance cannot corrupt or decay. 1 Corinthians 15:52 says, “In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed.” Second, our inheritance is undefiled. This means that our inheritance is free from any fault. Hebrew 7:26 says, “For such a High Priest was fitting for us, *who is* holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and has become higher than the heavens.” Because the One who paid our penalty is undefiled, He has also made our inheritance so that it is undefiled. Third, our inheritance does not fade away. 1 Peter 1:24 - 25 says, “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.” Just as the Word of God will endure forever, even so our inheritance will endure forever.

The reason that we can have peace and know that these things are true is due to the fact that we are kept by the power of God through faith for salvation. Romans 1:16 says, “For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes, for the Jew first and also for the Greek.” Here we are reminded of the fact that the salvation that we have received has been received through the power of God. He is the One who has all power. 1 Corinthians 1:18 says, “For the message of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God.” We have been saved by the message of the cross. That message is foolishness to the world but to us it is the power of God.

God is also ready to reveal the eternal life that we have at the last time. Luke 12:40 says, “Therefore you also be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect.” As Christians, we are to be ready for the coming of the Lord at any time. 1 Corinthians 15:52 says, “In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed.” We want to encourage our physical and spiritual children to be ready for the coming of the Lord at any moment because God is ready to reveal the eternal life that we have and Christ will come suddenly. May the Lord richly bless you as you help your children learn about our future inheritance.