

“May grace (the divine influence upon the heart, and its reflection in the life; including gratitude) and peace (prosperity and quietness) be yours in the fullest measure” 1 Peter 1:2b.

Because – We have a living hope!

1Peter 1:3 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,

This is the Gospel – without it, there is no hope! The Gospel is the foundation of the living hope we have in Christ. Jesus died for the sins of mankind and rose from the dead, thus giving those who believe the hope of eternal life.

The qualifying word in the above verse is God’s mercy, His compassion towards mankind. We define compassion as having a deep awareness of and sympathy for another’s suffering; understanding the suffering of others and wanting to do something about it (*WordWeb*).

If we think about the concept of mercy or compassion in our own human understanding alone, we sorely miss the real implication of God’s mercy. Our compassion only extends as far as we are able to perceive someone’s circumstances. Our show of compassion is limited. How often have you tried to console someone while admitting you are not fully able to comprehend his or her pain? Also, we get tired of showing compassion to those who are always ‘needy’. Our attitude of helping can sometimes be mixed with resentment because we have other pressing things to be done. This is not so with God. He is rich in mercy, understanding of all our concerns, desiring to pour His love upon us at all times, and desiring to bless all those who call upon Him.

Eph 2:4-5 But God, being rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, even when we were dead in our transgressions, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved),

God is great in mercy. God is rich in mercy. God is perfect in mercy. He chose to fully embrace humankind because of His love. We deserve wrath yet He gives mercy. Mercy is something undeserved, God’s mercy is not based on our merits but on God’s character. God’s compassion is not limited; He knows and understands all things. God’s compassion cannot be used up; He never tires of our need for Him. God’s compassion is always available to the individual who reaches out to Him, and often is showered upon us even without our awareness.

Hebrews 4:15-16 says, For we do not have a high priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but One who has been tempted in all things as [we are, yet] without sin. Let us therefore draw near with confidence to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and may find grace to help in time of need.

In 1 Peter 1:3, God’s compassion is described as great. The KJV uses the word abundant. It is plenteous. At this moment in time, the world is experiencing shortages of items due to the Covid 19 pandemic. We are almost continuously informed that there is not enough medical supplies and equipment to handle the number of those infected. Paper goods and disinfectants are being rationed. It is common to see a sign reading ‘one per person’ in the aisles at a grocery store. Even before this virus, many

individuals understood what it meant to have need. In direct contrast to these shortages is the abundant mercy of our God - always enough, always available.

Exodus 34:6; Psalm 86:5; 1 Timothy 1:14

God's great mercy is active. His love for us and His compassion for us was displayed in Jesus Christ. The mercy of God is so much more than a feeling, it is doing. It is more than coming alongside; it is providing the ultimate solution. It is more than simply being aware or having sympathy. God manifested His great mercy in the death and resurrection of His only Son.

1Peter 2:24 and He Himself bore our sins in His body on the cross, that we might die to sin and live to righteousness; for by His wounds you were healed.

How can we possibly understand this and not shout for joy and thankfulness! This *IS* amazing grace!

### ♥ Consider – What does it mean to have a living hope?

Transport yourself back to the time of Peter's writing. He had spent time with Jesus and had confidence that Jesus was the Messiah who would save Israel. Then Jesus was crucified and died. Imagine what that would have done to his hope. For a time, he probably wondered about what he had believed, and he may have lost hope. Read the account in [Luke 24:13-24](#). "And the hope, that with them, died with their Master, and seemed to be buried in his grave, was restored by the certainty of his resurrection. From Christ's preaching, miracles, &c., they had a hope of eternal life, and all other blessings promised by him; by his death and burial this hope became nearly, if not altogether, extinct, but by his resurrection the hope was revived", *Adam Clarke's Commentary*.

Compare that which is dead to that which is alive. There is no expectation in that which is dead. There is no action and no response. Something which is alive is active, alert, animated, and has expectation for the future. The KJV says we have "a lively" hope. It is real, it is joyful, it is energetic and abiding. This is a description of our life as God's children, we are sustained by this hope. We have a life renewed, a heart revived.

*Matthew Henry's Commentary on the Whole Bible* says, "The hope of a Christian has this excellency, it is a living hope. The hope of eternal life in a true Christian is a hope that keeps him alive, quickens him, supports him, and conducts him to heaven. Hope invigorates and spirits up the soul to action, to patience, to fortitude, and perseverance to the end".

1 Peter 1:3 begins with "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ". Blessed literally means adorable. Not as in what is seen, but adoration belonging to God because of who He is and what He has done. It is only because of Him and His plan for our redemption through the death of His Son that we are even able to claim His promises.

John 3:3 Jesus answered and said to him, "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God."

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,

*Adam Clarke's Commentary* says, "Let that God have praise who is the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, and who deserves the praise of every human being for his infinite mercy to the world, in its redemption by Christ Jesus". God deserves the praise of all mankind for his infinite mercy to the world. The commencement of 1 Peter is full of gratitude and joy for our salvation. We have a living hope because of God's love, because Jesus conquered sin and death. Without the resurrection, our hope is dead. "Whatever enemies, snares, dangers, temptations, beset us in our way to heaven, we shall be more than conquerors, if God be our keeper, and if He implants true faith in our hearts, which never faileth" (*Haweis*).

Praise be to God for the greatness of our salvation and for the future awaiting us in His heavens. "Note, (1.) We can never enough be thankful, when we remember the abundant mercy of our God and Father in Jesus Christ to our sinful souls. (2.) Every blessing flows from boundless and unmerited grace. (3.) The resurrection of Jesus from the dead is the grand foundation of our hope; and it is a lively hope, animating the soul to patience, purity, and perseverance, and never faileth till it is swallowed up in fruition", *Thomas Haweis*.

"By the virtue and power of it [the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead], we are raised to a spiritual life, and our hopes of eternal life are thereby strengthened and confirmed. The justification of our persons, the regeneration of our natures, the resurrection of our bodies, the glorification of our souls and bodies, are singular fruits and benefits of Christ's resurrection", *William Burkitt New Testament*.

♥ **Do you have the glorious hope of eternal life?**

♥ **Even in the midst of afflictions and troubles, are you blessing God for His abundant mercy?**

♥ **What is your worship?**

1 Chronicles 29:10-13; 2 Corinthians 1:3; Ephesians 1:3

Romans 15:13 Now may the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that you may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.