

### **Review – 1 Peter 1:1-3**

The Christians Peter wrote to were being prosecuted, had been displaced, and felt as strangers in the area which used to be their 'home'. They met with opposition, trouble, and affliction because of their beliefs.

Peter reminds them they have been saved for a purpose, chosen to live in holiness and obedience. So, it is no surprise that they feel like they do not belong – they are to be different from the world. God is the one working on their hearts and He will give them peace through all difficulty.

#### **♥ Do you think and act different than the world?**

Even though most of us will not experience persecution because of our faith, we hopefully do feel as if we do not belong. The reminder that we have been saved for God's purpose and He is working in our lives for His pleasure and honor, can give us peace in all circumstances even extreme difficulties – God is in control!

We have a living hope – a certain expectation of eternal life. This reality helps to keep our time on earth in a right perspective. We deserve nothing yet God has chosen to show us great mercy and compassion. He extended His love to us through the death and resurrection of His Son.

These truths should compel us to action. We are to live in praise and gratitude for the gift of our salvation. Our redeemed lives, every blessing that we see as good and even the life circumstances we do not understand, are to be offerings to God for His glory. Read the example given in [1 Chronicles 29:9-16](#) as David consecrated the building of the temple under Solomon's rule. Also read Job's response when he was told all his children had perished, "[Then Job arose and tore his robe and shaved his head, and he fell to the ground and worshiped. And he said, "Naked I came from my mother's womb, And naked I shall return there. The LORD gave and the LORD has taken away. Blessed be the name of the LORD."](#) Job 1:20-21

#### **♥ What is your reaction to difficult circumstances?**

[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.

### **1 Peter 1:4**

["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 an inheritance imperishable and undefiled that will not fade away, in heaven.

1Peter 1:4 to [obtain] an inheritance [which is] imperishable and undefiled and will not fade away, reserved in heaven for you,

When you consider receiving an **inheritance**, what do you think of? It is the property received by an heir. It can be money, land, jewelry, stocks, and other possessions that once belonged to another individual, most often a parent or family member. The story of the Prodigal son in Luke chapter 15 gives us a picture of inheritance. It is not the main point of the story, yet it is a clear picture of the fleeting value of an earthly inheritance.

### ♥ What is the result of many promises given on earth by men?

Heaven is promised to God's children by God who is perfect!

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,

The inheritance of eternal life with God is sure; it is not fleeting, cannot be used up, and cannot even be given away. This is the one and only possession that we can claim with certainty now and forever, all because of God's great love.

1 Peter 1:3 tells us God caused us to be born again to a living hope. **What is that hope? 1 Peter 1:4 says it is our inheritance in heaven.** This inheritance is available to us through the resurrection of Jesus. This inheritance speaks of our relationship with the Father. We are *His* heirs because of *His* choosing. We are accepted in His family through Christ, adopted as His own.

### ♥ If you had something of great value, would you simply choose an unknown name to write in your will?

Romans 8:15-17 For you have not received a spirit of slavery leading to fear again, but you have received a spirit of adoption as sons by which we cry out, "Abba! Father!" The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God, and if children, heirs also, heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ, if indeed we suffer with [Him] in order that we may also be glorified with [Him.]

Our inheritance in Christ is **imperishable**, meaning it continues, it will not decay, it is incorruptible.

### ♥ Can you think of any earthly thing that is imperishable?

All earthly inheritance here will be parted with; our inheritance in heaven is eternal. Think of the words abiding and enduring, lasting forever. Our inheritance in Christ cannot be taken away once we are His. The word 'imperishable' or 'incorruptible' from Strong's Greek Dictionary <apthartos> is explained as undecaying in essence or continuance.

James 1:12 Blessed is a man who perseveres under trial; for once he has been approved, he will receive the crown of life, which [the Lord] has promised to those who love Him.

1Peter 1:23 for you have been born again not of seed which is perishable but imperishable, [that is,] through the living and abiding word of God.

John 10:27-29 "My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me; and I give eternal life to them, and they shall never perish; and no one shall snatch them out of My hand. "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.

Our inheritance is **undefiled**, meaning it is unsoiled or pure. If we look around us, it is easy to see how sin affects the world. In contrast, our inheritance in heaven is unaffected by sin in the world; sin has no place in heaven. Nothing impure can enter heaven. Read what John writes about heaven in a vision from God.

Revelation 21:27 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.

Our inheritance is pure, unpolluted. On earth, it is possible to gain an inheritance dishonestly perhaps from changing records or wills or even taking someone to court. An inheritance in heaven cannot be stained by impure or dishonest motives. Those whom God calls are His, period. He will lose none of His own and He will not admit those who are not His own. No one will sneak into heaven or be able to fool themselves or God that they belong.

Leviticus Chapter 18 is an account of God speaking to Moses, warning the Israelites to live according to God's laws and not follow after the abominations of those before them who had defiled the land with their sin.

Sin is not the rule or control of a believer's life. God's grace is sufficient to overcome the power of sin. It seems the Apostle Paul had a propensity to think too highly of himself, which is pride, which is sin. God knows our individual weaknesses and our personal struggles with sin. Out of love, He provides what is needed for us to defeat it. When Paul felt weak and entreated God for help, he was reminded of God's sufficiency, "And He has said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for power is perfected in weakness." (2 Corinthians 12:9) Here on earth we have God's power to be victorious over sin. His heavens are befitting of His glory – pure and without the stain of sin. God is holy, perfectly righteous. Take a moment to imagine no sin anywhere – no wrong thoughts, no bad motives, no hurt feelings, nothing unjust, no physical pain or sorrow, no regret, no disappointment, no hurtful language, no bad decisions. Give your life to thank God for the incredible promise of Heaven.

Our inheritance **will not fade away**. It is perpetual, everlasting.

1Peter 1:24 For all flesh is like grass, and all its glory like the flower of grass. The grass withers, and the flower falls off.

Isaiah 40:7-8 The grass withers, the flower fades, When the breath of the LORD blows upon it; Surely the people are grass. The grass withers, the flower fades, But the word of our God stands forever.

♥ **Think about the contrast between trusting in people and things upon the earth, with trusting in an eternal God and heaven.**

Everything on this earth is in a state of decline or decomposition. Take a quick glance at your skin compared to several years ago. Archaeologist are constantly

uncovering things in the past, covered by years of exposure and forgotten by time. Our lives on earth are only a slight blip of time in the context of eternity. The only thing that will last is our relationship with God, our inheritance in His heavens.

Something that fades away becomes less and less with time, exposure, or use. Yet, Heaven cannot become less than it is. Its value will always remain perfect. *Albert Barnes NT Commentary* says, "This denotes perpetuity in the sense that everything there will be kept in its original brightness and beauty". Perhaps think 'Garden of Eden' untouched by sin.

Our inheritance is **reserved in heaven**. This is our hope, the gospel (Col 1:5); a crown of righteousness (2 Ti 4:8); victory (Isa 54:17); a place with those who are sanctified by faith (Ac 26:18); in the presence of God forever (Rev 22:3-5).

### ♥ What is the expectation when you have made a reservation or an appointment?

2Timothy 4:8 in the future there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will award to me on that day; and not only to me, but also to all who have loved His appearing.

Consider this – you have a reservation – your name written in Christ's blood – to claim your inheritance in heaven. It cannot be cancelled, even due to dire circumstances. No weather phenomena or world-wide pandemic will change the reservation God has made for you in heaven. It is stamped on your heart and in your soul, nothing will affect God's claim on you. He is keeping His eye upon you. God holds fast to His own. God has appointed us as His children for His heaven. We do not possess heaven while on this earth, but it is secured for our future.

At the point of history, I am writing this, security seems to have been uprooted. The world is in a health crisis and along with that we have a financial crisis, government upheaval and authority are being dismantled. People are at risk of losing their jobs, homes, health, identity, and purpose they have sought in earthly things. This is opposite of our hope in heaven, it is fixed and abiding still. God's children and their inheritance are kept safely by His power (1 Peter 1:5).

Our heavenly inheritance is, "In substance incorruptible; in purity undefiled; in beauty unfading", (from *Jamieson-Fausset-Brown Commentary*).

### ♥ What is the object of your hope?

### ♥ What is your destiny?

Matthew 25:34 "Then the King will say to those on His right, 'Come, you who are blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.

1Peter 5:4 And when the Chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the unfading crown of glory.

*Philip Doddridge* says this of 1 Peter 1:4, "And by whom we are brought to the cheerful and confident expectation of an inheritance, incorruptible, undefiled, and unfading, which nothing can spoil, which nothing can pollute, and which is incapable of

any internal decay, as well as external violence. This inheritance is reserved in the heavens for you and for all true believers”.

Ephesians 1:18 [I pray that] the eyes of your heart may be enlightened, so that you may know what is the hope of His calling, what are the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints,

Psalm 31:19 How great is Thy goodness, which Thou hast stored up for those who fear Thee, Which Thou hast wrought for those who take refuge in Thee, before the sons of men!

Paul and Timothy address their faithful brothers and sisters in Christ with this reminder of their hope, “because of the hope laid up for you in heaven, of which you previously heard in the word of truth, the gospel”, Colossians 1:5.

Let’s keep our focus Heavenward. “If we have hoped in Christ in this life only, we are of all men most to be pitied”, 1 Corinthians 15:19.