

“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 –

- o **The result of faith in Jesus Christ through God's grace is the salvation of our soul (v.9)**

1Peter 1:9 obtaining as the outcome of your faith the salvation of your souls.

We have a living hope, an inheritance in heaven, the protection of God's power, opportunities to prove our faith, and a love for God that is able to produce joy in all circumstances.

Do you set goals? Most of us look ahead and plan for the next steps in our life. From the moment a child is born, each new achievement is celebrated – the first smile, the first time rolling over and sitting up, the first steps, the first tooth, and the first words. Then learning and formal education is encouraged as each level in school is passed. We plan for the future, thinking ahead to careers, relationships, family, and retirement.

We even hedge our plans with insurance. However, no matter how comprehensive your insurance policies are, they cannot stop something from happening. Insurance only helps when things do occur. For instance, fire insurance will never produce the security that you will not have a fire, instead it will replace items lost to the fire. Health insurance will not prevent you from getting an illness, it will help pay the cost of your care. We could go on and on with this same scenario. The point is, our plans and all we do to protect those plans, have limits. This is all fine for our time on earth, but do we look ahead to eternity? Do you have true life insurance? Not the kind that provides a benefit to those you leave behind, but the insurance that promises your eternal dwelling in heaven.

♥ **What insurance do you have for your soul?**

♥ **What is your eternal goal?**

These questions are more important than anything else we can address in our lives. 1 Peter 1:9 speaks about the outcome of our faith. God gives us a defined result of faith, a conclusion of our trust and belief in Him when we die. Eternal life insurance is a one-time purchase only by the blood of Jesus. It is free to those who choose to receive it.

Consider this scenario. A poor man dies leaving nothing to his relatives. No insurance policies, no inheritance, nothing of physical value. As an observer at his memorial service, a friend notices the chatter is one of sadness and sorrow for this individual who had nothing and left nothing. In the muffled quietness, his friend clears his throat and announces that their acquaintance who has died, was not poor at all. Astonished, the crowd stops talking as silence and hope fills the room, and undivided attention is given to the speaker. He looks around the room making eye contact with

those who are most distraught and announces that there is no reason to despair, their loved one had riches too numerous to count. At this point you can hear a pin drop. Now everyone's eyes are on the speaker, their complete attention is given to him as they excitedly wait to hear what they might have inherited. The speaker shares the Gospel, unfolding the meaning of God's grace to each individual and how, by accepting the gift of His Son offered to them, they too could receive riches beyond compare. The reaction is disappointment as one by one the crowd disperses with heads hung low. Their original thoughts fill their minds of how sad it was that someone they knew died so poor. Let me ask you, who is truly poor? The gentleman who died into the arms of Jesus, or the crowd who did not recognize true riches that were freely offered?

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

Hebrews 10:36 For you have need of endurance, so that when you have done the will of God, *you may receive what was promised.*

Ro 6:22 But now having been freed from sin and enslaved to God, you derive your benefit, resulting in sanctification, *and the outcome, eternal life.*

♥ **What will be the result of your faith?**

♥ **Are you more concerned about physical riches or spiritual riches – what gets the most investment? Do you give more attention to your personal portfolio or the perfecting of your faith?**

As God's child, there is great cause for rejoicing. Your soul, that part of you which will continue on through eternity, is secure. Salvation is the object and result of faith. 1 Peter 1:9 addresses the assurance a believer has for their eternal life with Christ.

"Receiving--in sure anticipation; "the end of your faith," that is, its crowning consummation, finally completed "salvation". *Jamieson-Fausset-Brown Commentary*

"Receiving with unspeakable delight, as a full equivalent of all your trials, the great end of your faith, {even} the complete salvation of {your} souls; a prize of infinitely greater importance than all you can be called to sacrifice for its sake!" *Philip Doddridge N.T.*

As we continue to move through this challenging time in our world, navigating the guidelines of 'safer at home' and 'social distancing' born from the Covid 19 pandemic, we have choices to make. I am certain each of us is beginning to struggle as we battle once again with cancelling plans and feeling isolated

We can either focus on what we believe we have missed out on or we can focus on what we know is promised for our future. The outcome of these choices is opposite to one another. The first will produce unrest and despair and tempt us to do things the way we want. The second will produce peace and hope and remind us to act in a manner that befits God's children, always keeping our eyes on the prize.

We have become used to instant gratification. We want results now and waiting for them has become a lost practice. We need to look to the outcome of our faith, the salvation of our souls, this is our focus. We are working towards the final goal of our salvation, eternal life in heaven with Jesus. Until then we are to represent Christ well, as His children, even through difficulties.

Think upon the years you persevered in your education, sacrificing sleep in order to study. Your eyes were on that final diploma. Consider the years spent in a career. The benefits of longevity are realized at the end. Many of us can look at the energy, time and sacrifice it took to raise children. The hopeful reward is their maturing to adulthood and for some of us, grandchildren. How invested are you in your eternal future? Are you persevering to the end?

1Peter 1:15 but like the Holy One who called you, be holy yourselves also in all [your] behavior;

Because of God's grace and continued work in our lives, we are able to combat our weakness toward sin and live pleasing to Him. May grace and peace be yours in fullest measure because your faith is based on the Cross of Christ.

Review the first 9 verses of 1 Peter 1 –

Peter, a fisherman turned follower of Jesus, wrote this epistle to the Christians who were strangers – whether having left the tradition of Jewish law or heathenism, they no longer 'belonged'. Their home was no longer considered earthly but heavenly, so Peter referred to them as strangers and foreigners. They were driven from their countries, experienced opposition, and trials, and were tempted to return to their former beliefs.

These Christian converts were reminded of the grace which they possessed in Jesus Christ. Even in difficulties and afflictions, peace could be found because of their hope, because of God's protection, because there was joy for the future, because of their proven faith. This was all for God's glory, looking to the end goal which was salvation of their souls. Peace was afforded to them through their trials and promised through eternity.

In verses 10 and 11, the Apostle clarifies some facts regarding salvation, using the example of the prophets who had lived before them.

1Peter 1:10 As to this salvation, the prophets who prophesied of the grace that [would come] to you made careful search and inquiry,

The prophets had much less evidence than we have today. There is security in knowing that someone else has tried something before us and proclaimed it to be worthwhile. Picture a couple of children sitting at a table with their lunches. All are served something that looks new. Everyone is hesitant to try this item until they see someone else take a taste. Then they are encouraged to try it also because one of their own says it is okay. Consider clinical trials for different treatments of disease. Currently

we are awaiting a vaccine for Covid 19. Many decisions will be based on the results of trials. There is value in someone having gone before you with proven results.

Verse 10 begins with the words, *“Of which salvation”* (KJV), or *“As to this salvation”* (NASB). The NIV translation says, *“Concerning this salvation”* which begins a clarification of what Peter is encouraging them to hold fast to – their faith, the salvation they already have, and the advantages of God's grace in their lives. His reasoning is that the prophets, having less information, made careful examination of the revelations given to them and were able to conclude that grace under the Messiah was superior to the law. God gives abundant grace to His children now and forever. In direct contrast to the Old Testament Law, which was based on works, grace is something freely given with no connection to being earned or deserved.

Apply It! *It is good to examine what we believe.* The Bible tells us the prophets made careful search and inquiry. They sought to understand the meaning of what they heard. *Adam Clarke's Commentary* says, “they themselves did not know the time when these things were to take place, nor the people among and by whom He was to suffer ... they therefore *inquired accurately or earnestly*, and *searched* diligently, *inquiring* of others who were then under the same inspiration, and *carefully searching* the writings of those who had, before their time, spoken of these things”.

Hebrews 11:6 And without faith it is impossible to please [Him], for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and [that] *He is a rewarder of those who seek Him.*

Daniel 9:3 *So I gave my attention to the Lord God to seek [Him by] prayer and supplications, with fasting, sackcloth, and ashes.*

Jeremiah 29:12-13 'Then you will call upon Me and come and pray to Me, and I will listen to you. 'And you will seek Me and find [Me,] when you search for Me with all your heart.

- ♥ **Do you seek to know more fully the meaning of your salvation?**
- ♥ **Do you search the truths in God's word to understand the gift you have in Christ?**

Pause for a moment and consider your actions towards growing in your knowledge and love for God. When I initially wrote this, we were ten weeks into a 'safer at home' mandate to slow the spread of Covid 19. During that time, formal activities of fellowship and gathering had stopped. Online services and zoom meetings had become the norm and led to opportunities to continue to grow in the faith and pursuit of Christ. This is good and shouts out a loud praise for technology.

Yet, what if this technology were not available? Would your growth stagnate?

♥ Are you solely dependent on others to move your walk forward?

The actions of enquiring <ekzeteo> and searching diligently <exereunao> demand personal attention.

Enquire in 1 Peter 1:10, means to search out, investigate, crave, demand, worship, seek after carefully, and diligently. To search diligently means to explore.

Matthew Henry's Commentary says, "The words are strong and emphatic, alluding to miners, who dig to the bottom, and break through not only the earth, but the rock, to come to the ore."

Along with the many opportunities to continue to grow and be held accountable, there are also unfortunate opportunities to withdraw and become complacent and discouraged. A genuine understanding of the grace and mercy shown through Jesus Christ and the hope we have for the future, does not coincide with complacency. Our faith is responsive to circumstances surrounding us, causing us to look even more intently at our purpose. If God has called you to His arms there is no need for despair at any time.

♥ Is your response through trials one of growth and perseverance?

Finish strong, press forward, and diligently search the Scriptures in order to grow in your faith of Jesus redemptive grace. Be convinced, not only by relying on others' teaching but by your own careful examination.

Isaiah 55:6 Seek the LORD while He may be found; call upon Him while He is near.

Psalms 63:1 (A Psalm of David, when he was in the wilderness of Judah.) O God, Thou art my God; I shall seek Thee earnestly; my soul thirsts for Thee, my flesh yearns for Thee, in a dry and weary land where there is no water.

Psalms 119:2 How blessed are those who observe His testimonies, who seek Him with all [their] heart.

1Peter 1:10-11 As to this salvation, the prophets who prophesied of the grace that [would come] to you made careful search and inquiry, **seeking to know what person or time the Spirit of Christ within them was indicating as He predicted the sufferings of Christ and the glories to follow.**

The prophets made careful search and inquiry –

- 1- **Seeking to know who** (who would the promised Messiah be like, what would He act like?)
- 2- **Seeking to know when** these things would occur

When would the events leading up to this time take place? The prophets taught others of the coming Messiah and the salvation He would offer. Through the Spirit's guidance, they were directed to truth.

The example we have is to be seeking to understand God more, focused on the future fulfillment of Christ's church and His ultimate glory. We have the blessing of having the account of Jesus' ministry on earth, of His death and resurrection, of the preaching of the Gospel going forth, and of the history of the church being established. Jesus will return and He will establish His eternal Kingdom.

Look closely at what it means to seek something. It takes effort, an earnest desire to attempt to gain knowledge or reach a goal. Consider the lengths you will go in order to pursue an interest you have. Time, energy, resources, focus, planning, and thought are poured into those things that matter to us. It also takes diligence and commitment. If I am committed to feeding my body each day yet lack the commitment to feed my soul, what does this say about my priorities or what is most important to me?

♥ **What occupies the majority of your time? Are you intent on growing in your understanding and knowledge of your Savior?**

As mentioned earlier, we have the great advantage of God's completed written word. Jesus Christ has come as foretold, He suffered, died, and ascended into heaven. We are now looking towards His future return and eternal kingdom. Read the following account of Jesus' ascension into heaven and the foretelling of His future return.

Acts 1:9-11 And after He had said these things, He was lifted up while they were looking on, and a cloud received Him out of their sight. And as they were gazing intently into the sky while He was departing, behold, two men in white clothing stood beside them; and they also said, "Men of Galilee, why do you stand looking into the sky? This Jesus, who has been taken up from you into heaven, will come in just the same way as you have watched Him go into heaven."

The Old Testament saints were anticipating the coming of their Messiah.

Isaiah 9:6 For a child will be born to us, a son will be given to us; and the government will rest on His shoulders; and His name will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Eternal Father, Prince of Peace.

We anticipate His return. Christ will come again.

Revelation 1:7-8 BEHOLD, HE IS COMING WITH THE CLOUDS, and every eye will see Him, even those who pierced Him; and all the tribes of the earth will mourn over Him. Even so. Amen. "I am the Alpha and the Omega," says the Lord God, "who is and who was and who is to come, the Almighty."

We have information – the certain prediction of Jesus coming back to earth, of setting up His kingdom, which if you are saved, you will be a part. Peter was able to write of the hope of our salvation because men were willing to speak about it.

- ♥ **Do others know what you believe?**
- ♥ **Are you looking for opportunities to share why you have peace in an uncertain world?**