

Congregation of our Lord Jesus Christ,

When Peter wrote this Epistle (书信), he is writing to a church that is suffering, oppressed, experiencing pain and enduring persecution (逼迫). In verse 1 he says, they are scattered and strangers in this world, verse 6 he speaks of the suffering of grief in all kinds of trials (试炼) and enduring trials is a major theme in the Epistle. And, he does not try to sympathize (同情) with them by telling them their trials will end, the pain will cease, or even that the world will become a friendlier place if they can just hang on and persevere (坚持不懈) long enough.

What Peter presents to the suffering church is far greater than anything this world could provide for them - Living hope in the living God! Peter declared that they possessed something within their hearts that would carry them through whatever adversity (逆境) they faced. They just needed to be reminded of the hope they had in Christ and to keep this always before them.

Our situation here in Canada today may be different, and yet it is similar. We are facing increased pressure to conform to society and abandon our faith. Our modern society isn't interested in a Biblical worldview, to live according to Biblical standards, or even accept the reality of sin and the need for a Saviour. In life, we face the reality of pain, trials, or uncertainty because we live in a world under the curse because of sin. Even Christians (I am sure you have experienced this) can become discouraged and have doubts about their faith in Christ. We are not immune (免疫的) to bad feelings!

If you find yourself questioning God and what He is doing in your life, there is a message in our text for you today to help you and to encourage you so that you do not find yourself living a life of doubt and defeat, but rather faith and trust in your Covenant (约, 圣约) God!

May you be able to do what Peter exhorts you do here and that is to **Praise God for giving you living hope** even when things are not going well - life.

- 1. The source of this hope - verse 3**
- 2. The substance of this hope - verse 4**
- 3. The security of this hope - verse 5**

### **1. The source of this hope**

In Verses 1-2 leading up to verse 3, Peter's desire is for these suffering Christians to take the spotlight (聚光灯, 关注) away from their present circumstances and focus on who they are and what they possess as Christians. They are the elect of God! The Father chose them to be His own! They have been set apart or sanctified (被圣化) by the Holy Spirit! And Jesus has sacrificed Himself on the cross to wash away their sins!

If you ever need to get yourself into a proper state of mind just spend some time and meditate on what Peter is saying to you in verse 2 about who you are as a Christian! Peter then goes into a doxology (颂赞, 颂词) of praise in verses 3-5 to now show what the church possesses as the elect of God. A wonderful living hope!

We will begin in verse 3 to observe source of this hope

***1 Peter 1:3 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 (复活) of Jesus Christ from the dead***

**The Father and the Son are the source of this our hope and that there is no hope apart from them:**

**First, the Father desires to show us mercy,**

It's described as "*abundant mercy*" Superlative (最高级的) idea and shows that it is rich, abundant and overflowing! As He is great, so also is His mercy for us! **Mercy** is the exercise of God's goodness in His compassion and forbearance (忍耐) with us as positively corrupt sinners. It is the Lord who desires to show kindness to us even we don't realize we are in need of His leniency (宽大, 仁慈) and care!

**Micah 7:18 tells us that it is His delight or that He is pleased to show mercy to us and will not remain angry with His covenant people!**

Jeremiah expressed great hope in the midst of affliction (痛苦, 灾难) and destruction of Jerusalem when he said, *Lamentations 3:21-23* <sup>21</sup> *This I recall to my mind, Therefore I have hope.* <sup>22</sup> *Through the LORD's mercies we are not consumed, Because His compassions fail not.* <sup>23</sup> *They are new every morning; Great is Your faithfulness.*

- Due to this great mercy, the Father gives His people spiritual renewal (重生) causing us to be "**born again**" based on the death and resurrection of Jesus. Not only is the Father the source of spiritual life and hope, but also Jesus makes it happen through His death and resurrection!

**Note the important connection** between the life of Jesus and the Spiritual life we possess. "*has begotten us again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead*"

I have been taken from spiritual death to spiritual life because of Jesus physical death and physical life from the dead. Think of it this way as well, if we do not have this spiritual life within us, our lives are actually hopeless - even if we don't realize it! Living saints

have living hope whereas sinners dead in sin do not have such hope, but only certain dread of judgment and perdition (毁灭) .

Those testify / not realize life actually hopeless before knew the Lord . Outside of Jesus, Many are resting in a sham kind of hope thinking they have something good to look forward to when the opposite is the case.

**Ill - Like a guy who is dying of thirst in the desert and he looks off into the distance and he thinks there is water and he starts to run toward it thinking his salvation is just right there if he can only get a little farther**

**- only to find out it was a mirage (海市蜃楼) - and there is nothing there.**

- If you do not have faith in Christ and trust Him for your salvation you will only possess a mirage of hopelessness rather than the reality of a living hope.

**- Make sure you have your life in Christ and you can say with Paul**

*Galatians 2:20 "I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me."*

Christ lives in me! What a thought! And *I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.* This is why this hope is described as "living" because it has a foundation on the living Saviour which is Jesus. If your faith is in Christ then you have been given a hope that is sure and firm. Peter includes himself in this text - he says, ***he has begotten us again to a living hope*** What was His experience?

Peter and the other disciples (门徒) faced real uncertainty during the time of Christ's passion (when Jesus was arrested, on trial, and crucified). Peter denied that he knew the Lord and had even decided that he would go back to fishing because he thought that the death of Jesus was the end of the story - all hope for the future was lost.

**Was he right? Did he remain a fisherman? We know he didn't, so what changed things? The resurrected Christ changed everything He commissioned (托付) Peter to feed His sheep and continue to be a fisherman of souls.**

**- Peter/ others/ boldness to testify/ Jesus was alive! Jesus made the difference**

What makes the difference in your life? What gives you hope? Why do you persevere and not give up when things become difficult in your life? It must be Jesus! **Vs. 21 Praise God** that the Father's purpose is to give you hope as He has laid the foundation of that hope in Jesus His Son, the living Saviour risen from the dead to give you life as He desired to show you mercy.

Rest in Him by faith.

This now leads us to the....

## **2. The substance (实质) of this hope**

**In verse 4, Peter tells what he is referring to when he speaks about living hope. What exactly is this living hope?**

Usually, our concept of the word hope has the idea of desiring something in the future of which we are uncertain of attaining. So, a desire based on uncertainty - it might happen or might not.

**- Like all those Maple Leaf fans out there who hope the Leafs will actually be good and start to make the playoffs every year - might happen or maybe not!**

**Is that what we have here? Does Peter present to us an uncertain expectation of future blessing and life from God the Father?**

- No, the substance of this living hope is *an inheritance incorruptible* (不朽坏的) *and undefiled* (无玷污的) *and that does not fade away, reserved in heaven for you.* The only hope that lasts must be based on what the Father gives to us in Christ and not just what we think or feel. So, this is not some kind of wishful thinking or uncertain expectation that stands alone without a foundation. **It is actually something real and substantial - that which the believer possesses in Christ! Once we realize we have this inheritance (基业, 产业) then we can have confidence and boldness in our faith!**

The word for **inheritance** has the idea of property, possession, or what is promised or given by God to his people. People who have an inheritance are called heirs (继承人, 后嗣). But being an heir only has value if the person leaving the inheritance has something of value to give. We're so blessed there because the Bible says we are heirs of God and co-heirs with Christ" (Rom. 8:17). This means that all that God has is ours! In the OT it referred to an estate received by a child from its parents, showing a relationship between the two.

It also referred to the promised land received by the children of Israel as a gift from Jehovah. This is one of the covenant promises given to God's people by Jehovah. In the big picture as Israel entered into the promised land of Palestine and received rest, so we too shall enter into the new heavens and the new earth where we too receive our rest as part of God's covenant promise to us!

**Peter is telling us that not only do we have the hope of resurrection, but also of the hope of an eternity (永恒) in heaven.**

Jesus had resurrected from the dead and was ascended back to the Father, but He was not idle (无所事事的). He stands now as our Mediator (中保) and Intercessor (代求者), and He has gone to prepare a place for us to join Him in the splendors of heaven.

***John 14:1-3 Let not your heart be troubled; you believe in God, believe also in Me. <sup>2</sup> "In My Father's house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. <sup>3</sup> "And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself; that where I am, there you may be also.***

Note the description of this inheritance, for it is totally unlike any earthly inheritance that we could ever possess! In fact, Peter uses four terms to show the surety of this inheritance.

***... incorruptible and undefiled and that does not fade away, reserved in heaven for you***

**Our inheritance can never perish (*incorruptible*).** This means “nothing can ruin it; it does not age, deteriorate, or die; it does not have the seed of corruption within it.”

**It can never spoil (*undefiled*).** This means, it cannot be polluted or defiled, dirtied or infected. It means that our inheritance will be without any flaw or defect; it will be perfectly free from any defilement whatsoever.

**Also, this inheritance can never fade away.** It will never grow old because it is eternal; it cannot wear out, nor can it disappoint us in any way. Our heavenly home will be eternal, never ending. We will never have to make preparations to leave or say goodbye!  
***Colossians 3:4 When Christ who is our life appears, then you also will appear with Him in glory.***

***Reserved in heaven for you*** - The verb here shows the Saints do not reserve an inheritance for themselves in heaven, rather it is the Father that is doing the reserving for His people.

The word for "kept" means that it is guarded or preserved. It is to “watch over” something. The word is used of Peter when he was "kept" in prison by Herod pending his proposed execution (处决) (Acts 12:5). Our inheritance is both reserved and preserved. Mine is being kept in heaven for me; yours is being reserved and preserved equally for you.

**In my travels, I have sometimes gone to a hotel or motel, only to discover that the reservations have been confused or cancelled. This is very frustrating (令人沮丧)**

的) ! **This will not happen to us when we arrive in heaven, for our future home and inheritance are guaranteed and reserved.**

**In the midst of such uncertainty of the early church,** Peter reminds them of a very secure future. In fact, it was so secure that it was unchangeable. They had been saved by the grace of God, placed within the body of Christ, and they were to be sure of their heavenly inheritance.

The church today can lay claim to the same expectation of hope because our inheritance has real substance and is made firm and sure by a faithful Father who loves us and has reserved a place for us in His kingdom through Christ. There is nothing in this world that take can take away what the believer has in Christ! Praise God for our great inheritance!

and then last,

### **3. The security of this hope - verse 5**

*1 Peter 1:5 who are kept by the power of God through faith for salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.*

Peter now shifts his focus on the substance and surety of the inheritance to the security of the believer in this hope. Through faith, God's people are shielded / kept by the power of God! The word translated "kept" is a military word that means "guarded, protected, or shielded."

- Like a fort or a castle that is made firm and strong to protect all those inside from enemy attack - so too does the Lord watch over and protect His saints (圣徒) .

The tense of the verb reveals that we are *constantly* being guarded by God, assuring us that we shall safely arrive in heaven. Believers are not kept by their own power, but by the power of God. Our faith in Christ has so united us to Him that His power now guards us.

### **This is encouraging to those who burdened with sin and doubt**

"We are guarded.... for the salvation." As Peter had mentioned in vs. 2: sanctification of the Spirit, sprinkling with the blood of Christ. That is what gives us assurance (确据) that we will indeed receive the inheritance (in other words, God's work in us). God's power - has the idea of the ability or capacity of God. Points to His omnipotence (全能) . This means that God can do anything! If He has a purpose to bless His people, who can stop Him! How long will He guard us? Until Jesus Christ returns and we will share in the full revelation of His great salvation.

### **the salvation that is ready to be revealed in the last time.**

- The believer is already saved through faith in Christ ( [HYPERLINK](#) "about:blanksteplinkto4%2049%202:8-49%202:9" Eph. 2:8-9), but the completion of

that salvation awaits the return of the Saviour or when we go to be with Him in glory. Then we shall have new bodies and enter into a new environment, and possess our inheritance.

It is encouraging to know that we are “guarded for glory.”

According to [HYPERLINK \h Romans 8:30](#), Paul speaks as if we have already been glorified. ***Romans 8:30 Moreover whom He predestined (预先定下的) , these He also called; whom He called, these He also justified (称义) ; and whom He justified, these He also glorified.***

Even though there is suffering - can't compare to what we receive in glory!  
***Romans 8:18 For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us.***

The assurance of heaven is a great help to us today. The salvation "ready to be revealed in the last time" looks at the final aspects or realization of what Christians already have and enjoy.

Hardships and trials are a reality in life. Some of you may be in the midst of a raging storm today. The enemy would have you believe that hope is gone and there is no reason to continue. Peter reminds us that our hope is not in this world, but in the Lord Jesus Christ. The One who died and was raised to life so that we might also know the abundance of spiritual life and hope! We have much to gain in the future state in glory. In the meantime, He secures you and is able to equip you so that you will endure the struggles you face daily.

***1 Peter 1:6 In this you greatly rejoice, though now for a little while, if need be, you have been grieved by various trials***

If you are struggling today, come and behold the riches of who you are and what you possess as a child of God in Christ!

Your Father will provide for your need to help you and to encourage you so that you do not find yourself living a life of doubt and defeat, but rather faith and trust in your Covenant God!

May we praise the Father for giving us such a living hope! Amen