

Life Link

Countdown:

Music Video: "I Am Free"

Sermon Video Illustration: "Written on Your Heart"

Title: "Your Great Inheritance"

Big Idea: Through Christ, believers are heirs to a great eternal inheritance.

Text: 1 Peter 1:3-5

1 Peter 1:3-5 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, 4 to an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled and that does not fade away, reserved in heaven for you, 5 who are kept by the power of God through faith for salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.

NKJV

Introduction : Peter starts the body of his letter out with this doxology. He puts it right at the beginning while everyone is still paying attention and nobody is thinking about the Dallas Cowboys. It probably wouldn't be a bad idea if we started every service and sermon with "Praise be to God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ!" Praising the Lord really does prepare us to receive what He has to say to us.

Peter's greeting identifies who the doxology is from God the Father and Our Lord Jesus Christ this greeting identifies to us as Christians that his (Peter's) message is from God the Father and Our Lord Jesus and not just a letter from himself. This message is about a message of "Hope" to the church that is under persecution and has been scattered. Peter's message is a message of hope to all who face difficult times as a result of the dispersion (v.1) . and to His abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope, by the resurrection of Jesus Christ. His (Peter's) use of the word "begotten" ("anagennasas") refers our regeneration, our new birth as a result of the resurrection of Christ. The Lord Jesus Christ is "the First-begotten of the dead" (Rev 1:5); we are "buried with him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with him through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead" (Col 2:12). The Church, "which is his body" (Eph 1:23), died with him in his death, rose with him in his resurrection. Christians individually are baptized into his death, "that like as Christ was raised up from the dead. Regeneration without the resurrection would only produce dead works. It is only through the blood of Christ's which was shed that regeneration is possible.

Heb 9:14 how much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without spot to God, cleanse your conscience from dead works to serve the living God? NKJV

Peter states that because of the resurrection we have a "living hope" and that is our inheritance. He identifies (1) Reasons for the inheritance, (2) Reality of the inheritance, (3) Recipients of the Inheritance (4) The Receipt of the Inheritance

I. The Reasons for the Inheritance (v.3)

1 Pet 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 of Jesus Christ from the dead." (v. 3)

- a. In **Eph 2:12** the Apostle Paul reminds the church at Corinth that without Christ there is no hope. **Ephesians 2:12** "...having no hope and without God in the world. and if it were not for the sacrifice of Christ on the cross we would not have received the " unmerited favor of God (mercy).

Rom 11:30-31 For as you were once disobedient to God, yet have now obtained mercy through their disobedience, NKJV

Jude 21 keep yourselves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life. NKJV

- b. Peter clearly declares the connection between God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. God the Father states "this is my beloved Son" (Matt 3:17). The love of God is demonstrated in His Son (Jesus Christ) (Rom 5:8). Peter clearly states that the inheritance we have is eternally secure and is and comes through Jesus Christ

Romans 5:8 But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us. NKJV

- c. The phrase "living hope" is a direct connection to the "inheritance" that await us from Our Lord and living Savior. "I serve a living savior, He is in the world today" (He Lives) Typically for a person to receive an inheritance the " testator " must died, on the contrary we have a "living hope" Jesus Christ our hope is only in Him and no other

Heb 9:16-17 For where there is a testament, there must also of necessity be the death of the testator. 17 For a testament is in force after men are dead, since it has no power at all while the testator lives. NKJV

- i. Without the "living hope" we would have no inheritance, without the resurrection we would have no hope and without hope we would be most miserable and still in our sins.

1 Cor 15:14-19 And if Christ is not risen, then our preaching is empty and your faith is also empty. 15 Yes, and we are found false witnesses of God, because we have testified of God that He raised up Christ, whom He did not raise up — if in fact the dead do not rise. 16 For if the dead do not rise, then Christ is not risen. 17 And if Christ is not risen, your faith is futile; you are still in your sins! 18 Then also those who have fallen asleep in Christ have perished. 19 If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men the most pitiable. NKJV

- d. Peter states that this "living hope" is "through" (NT:1223 Greek-dia) the resurrection. The use of this word denotes that the "living hope" is being channel, a conduit to us and as a

result of Christ death and resurrection. The use of the word "resurrection" that Christ is "standing up for us again" or "raised to new life again".

1 John 2:1-2 My little children, these things I write to you, so that you may not sin. And if anyone sins, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous. 2 And He Himself is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only but also for the whole world. NKJV

- e. Is our living hope a function of our being "raised with Christ" reminds us to no longer live to the flesh but we live to Christ the "living hope"

Colossians 3:1 If then you were raised with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ is, sitting at the right hand of God. NKJV

II. The Realities of the Inheritance

"To an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled and does not fade away, reserved in heaven for you" (v. 4)

Peter identifies four attributes of our inheritance 1) incorruptible, 2) undefiled, 3) does not fade away, and 4) reserved. These four qualities of our inheritance describe the absolute surety of what God has prepared for each of His children. Just as a parent prepares an inheritance for his or her children God has established that the living hope through Jesus Christ.

Illustration: I have here in my hand a fairly new U. S. Treasury issued One Dollar Bill. Let's say I inherited it from one of my (poor) relatives. Right now it will buy me something that costs a dollar, like a sausage biscuit at McDonalds. But what if, through just carrying this bill around in my wallet for a few years, the bill just totally falls apart to the point that it become unrecognizable and therefore worthless? I can't go buy my sausage biscuit with that. What if I accidentally drop it into the toilet and so defile it that I wouldn't want to carry it around in my wallet, and I decide to just throw it in the trash? Again, there would be no sausage biscuit for me. What if I accidentally left it in my pants pocket and ran it through the washing machine and so faded it out that it looked like a counterfeit. Can't buy the sausage biscuit with that, either. What if I got mugged and someone stole my dollar, or I accidentally left it laying on a table somewhere, or the U. S. Treasury prints so many more dollars that it becomes worthless in value? Still, I wouldn't be able to get my sausage biscuit. But my incorruptible, undefiled, unfading, totally secure eternal inheritance does have those problems.

1. *We have an inheritance that is "incorruptible"*

Peter's use of the word "incorruptible" suggest that what God has reserved for us will not decay, nor can it be corrupted by anything. Paul wrote in 1Cor 5:6 "... Do you not know that a little leaven leavens the whole lump?" Jesus told us that treasure that is stored in Heaven is safe and secure from any form of corruption. A worldly inheritance is subject the loss or could be destroyed by the sin of this world.

Luke 12:33 "...a treasure in the heavens that does not fail, where no thief approaches nor moth destroys.

2. ***We have and inheritance that is "undefiled"*** .

God has given us an inheritance is fail proof to each person who are children of God "joint heirs with Jesus Christ." The heavenly inheritance worth is not determined by the worth of our money, the stock market or anything this world has to offer. It does not sometimes go up and sometimes come down; its value is the same the centuries through; it was worth the blood of Christ two thousand years ago, and it is worth the blood today again. Our Inheritance is not written on worthless paper with ink that will fade away but, is is secured by the blood of Christ Jesus.

Eph 1:7-10 In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace 8 which He made to abound toward us in all wisdom and prudence, 9 having made known to us the mystery of His will, according to His good pleasure which He purposed in Himself, NKJV

Text Illustration: A WORTHLESS PIECE OF PAPER- In 1830, a man named George Wilson was convicted of killing a government employee while robbing the U.S. Mail. He was tried and sentenced to be hanged. Andrew Jackson, then the President, issued a pardon for Wilson, but Wilson did a strange thing: he refused to accept the pardon and no one seemed to know what to do. The matter went to Chief Justice Marshall, perhaps one of the greatest Chief Justices we ever had, and he concluded that Wilson must be executed. "A pardon is a slip of paper," wrote Marshall, "the value of which is determined by the acceptance of the person to be pardoned. If it is refused, it is no pardon. George Wilson must be hanged." And he was! (SOURCE: George Maronge, Jr., Birmingham, Alabama. Leadership, Vol. 12, no. 3).

3. ***We have inheritance that "does not fade away"***

Many merchants print their receipt on thermo-fax paper and over time the printing will fade away and no longer be seen. Peter tells us that our eternal inheritance will not "fade away" it is secured by and written in the blood of Jesus. It is written down in the Book of Life forever. Jesus said "... these are my sheep and no man snatch them out of my hands" In the Old and New Testament, the word fade is associated with loss of strength or beauty. For example, Isaiah 40:7 speaks of all flesh being like grass and says that grass withers and flowers fade. In Isaiah 64:4, he says because of our iniquities, "we all fade as a leaf." James speaks of rich men who "fade." So, Peter is saying that the eternal inheritance won't lose its beauty, integrity, or strength.

John 10:28-30 And I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; neither shall anyone snatch them out of My hand. 29 My Father, who has given them to Me, is greater than all; and no one is able to snatch them out of My Father's hand. 30 I and My Father are one." NKJV

Heb 10:10 By that will we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ **once for all.**

Heb 9:12-13 Not with the blood of goats and calves, but with His own blood He entered the Most Holy Place **once for all**, having obtained eternal redemption. NKJV

4. ***We have inheritance that is "reserved"***

The use of the word **'reserved'** in the original text implies that our inheritance is being guarded or protected from loss or injury. It has God's watchful eye upon it to insure it is there when the time comes time for us to receive and take full advantage of that eternal inheritance (eternal Life). the use of this word is to means "to watch", to observed", "to guard" or protect. It is as if our inheritance has been deposited in a heavenly safe deposit box where God is guarding it for us under constant surveillance. The participle is in the perfect tense, speaking of a past completed action having a present results. It could be translated, "has been laid up and is now kept guarded in safe deposit." (Wuest Word Studies in The Greek New Testament, Vol. II)

Heb 9:15 And for this reason He is the Mediator of the new covenant, by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions under the first covenant, that those who are called may receive the promise of the eternal inheritance. NKJV

Heb 11:8-9 By faith Abraham obeyed when he was called to go out to the place which he would receive as an inheritance. And he went out, not knowing where he was going. NKJV

1 Peter 1:4-5 to an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled and that does not fade away, reserved in heaven for you, 5 who are kept by the power of God through faith for salvation ready to be revealed in the last time. NKJV

Text Illustration: ALEXANDER THE GREAT ON HOPE-Jesus is a sign of hope, and the friend of those who will not let hope die. He must increase, and we must decrease.

The Macedonian king, Alexander the Great, was about to launch a great campaign. It would be trying and difficult. It would mean slogging across the mountains, into unknown and dangerous territory. His campaign would require the hearts and loyalties of his officers and men. Alexander won the loyalties of his soldiers by distributing throughout his army all the wealth at his disposal. To each one he gave money or property until all his own resources were gone. One of his generals, Perdicas, then asked Alexander, "Sir, what have you reserved for yourself?" Alexander's answer was brief and to the point. "For myself I have kept only hope." "Hope".

Then Perdicas responded, "We who share in your labors will also take part in your hope." Jesus, "The time of fear is over; now comes the time of hope." (From a sermon by Joseph Smith, Friend of the Hopeful, 10/22/2009)

For the Christian our "hope" is in the Eternal King, Jesus Christ for He has laid up for us an inheritance that is incorruptible and undefiled and does not fade away, reserved in heaven for you

III. **The Recipients of the Inheritance...(v.4)**

1 Peter 1:4 to an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled and that does not fade away, reserved in heaven for you, NKJV

- a. More than a living hope is obtained for the believer in the realization of God's redemptive plan. Men are born into a status of heirship ("kleronomian" or inheritance). Peter is

reminding his readers that in the midst of persecution they ought to praise God and patiently wait for their eternal inheritance. Therefore, he wanted to increase their knowledge of the spiritual blessing that was already theirs by promise in Christ. The inheritance is described as imperishable, undefiled, and unfading (ESV). Three negative terms. In his great commentary on First Peter, F.B. Meyer notes *that, It is so much easier to say what the inheritance is not, than to set down the elements of its exceeding weight of glory.*

- i. Paige Patterson (A Pilgrim Priesthood: An Exposition of First Peter) writes, We must content ourselves with saying mostly what heaven is not because "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things that God hath prepared for them that love him" (1 Cor. 2:9).
- ii. However, there are three positive affirmations about the inheritance of the saint specified in this verse. The inheritance is (1) "apstharon" (incorruptible) in its substance, that is, not liable to death (2) "amianton" (undefiled) unstained in its purity, and (3) "amaranton" (unfading) timeless in its beauty. The inheritance is perfect. Nothing about the inheritance increases or decreases. It will never lose its magnificence. It was, is, and always will be perfect. In contrast, every earthly thing we know suffers weakness at one or more of these three points. Everything either perishes, becomes contaminated, or fades in its beauty.
- iii. Of this, Patterson writes, consider man, with age, the beauty of youth fades away, muscles atrophy, skin sags and wrinkles, strength diminishes. Long before this, man has lost his moral and spiritual purity by playing the deadly game of sin. Finally, man dies. What is true of man is heightened in every experience and material benefit in life. Experiences are tainted, subject to circumstance, and fade in memory. Material possessions lose their luster and fade until they perish. Only that which God had imparted to us, abides eternally.
- iv. What's more, the incorruptible nature, purity, and beauty of the inheritance is secured by God. It cannot be lost, removed, or separated from the believer. It is kept in a timeless, sinless realm. It is reserved (fixed or unalterable) (v.4), and kept (guarded or carefully watched) (v. 5). Taken together, these words affirm that the inheritance is certain.

IV. The Receipt of the Inheritance

"Who are kept by the power of God through faith for salvation" (v. 5)

- a. Verse 5 begins with the words "Who are kept" (NT:5432 phroureo) this phrase reminds us that there is a guard at the gate in order to protect us from loss, it implies a fort or garrison which its entrances and exit are guarded by the power of God. It is not secured by military might or hardware but by the power of God.

(1) "The word **"guarded"** (TEV *kept safe*; Gute Nachricht "keep and protect") is a military term, used to describe the act of protecting a city from its enemies, and here it is used of God securely protecting the believer from all dangers" (Nida) This word appears 4 times in the NT (once here and 3 other times used by Paul in 3 different

epistles). Philippians 4:7 “And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will **guard** your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.” This “guarding” in both Peter and Paul is initiated and sustained by God Himself to all believers. In Philippians it is the peace of God that guards and in 1 Peter we see the power of God guarding all believers.

- b. **This word "power"** is used in the New Testament 116 times and refers to the explosive force of the power of God to lives.

Acts 1:8 But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth." NKJV

Luke 9:1 Then He called His twelve disciples together and gave them power and authority over all demons, and to cure diseases. NKJV

- c. The power of God is being used to reserve our inheritance " faith for salvation".
- i. This “being guarded” comes through the conduit of **faith**. *Pistis*, a common word throughout the NT, and is used by Peter 5 times in this short letter alone. Three of the five occurrences of this word in this letter are located in close proximity in chapter 1 verses 5-9. Nida defines this word as follows, “to believe to the extent of complete trust and reliance—‘to believe in, to have confidence in, to have faith in, to trust, faith, trust.’” In this present context faith functions as a seal for this guarding coming from God’s power. Given that “being guarded” is in the present tense and is followed by “Through faith for a salvation”, this clause refers to the ongoing, present process of sanctification of the believer. The believer who fully places his complete trust in God will find security that rivals none other, the security of being guarded by God’s power.
- d. **“Ready to be revealed in the last time.” (v. 5)**
- i. 1 Peter 1:5 we have placed in Him, eternal security is not based on the faith of men, but on the faithfulness of God. The believer has been saved; he is being saved daily (through sanctification), and he will be saved when Christ returns (Rom 8:15-25). The end (completion, perfection) of our faith will be the complete salvation of the believer (v. 9), who will inherit a new body.
- e. Peter employs the uses of *Soterian*, “salvation”, four times in this letter. Interesting to note is the fact that three of those occurrences appear in close conjunction with *pistos* (see note on *pistis* above), in chapter 1 verses 5-10. For Peter faith and salvation go hand in hand and are not separate concepts. This specific greek word would not go unnoticed by those reading this letter near the time of its delivery. Kittel gives this important insight to the original usage in the Greek world of the words *sozo* and *soteria*, “σώζω and σωτηρία mean first ‘to save’ and ‘salvation’ in the sense of an acutely dynamic act in which gods or men snatch others by force from serious peril”. The Greek reader at this time would be thinking in those terms and understand that the salvation of which Peter writes about is the ultimate salvation from the ultimate peril. It is also important on this note to understand the current context of believers when Peter writes

this. Those believers of Peter's time were facing great persecution because of their faith and this letter very much focuses on Peter encouraging these believers to be steadfast because they will receive complete deliverance from their peril in "a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time".

f. Note: Reasons for Inheritance= Receipt of Mercy, Regeneration, and Resurrection

V. Conclusion

Certainly Peter's words in these verses gave hope and encouragement to the Christians of his day. A real question is whether or not they are words of hope for you. I recently read the story of Tomas Martinez, a penniless homeless guy living on the streets of a city in Bolivia. One day he was sitting on a park bench with the plastic bag containing all of his worldly goods, he was approached by two policemen who called him by name. He thought they wanted to arrest him for his alcohol and drug habits, so he took off running and disappeared without a trace. The police were not trying to arrest him. They were trying to tell him that he was the heir of a \$6 million inheritance left to him by his ex-wife. The great irony is that although Martinez is a multi-millionaire, he has never to this day claimed his inheritance.

Peter's epistle of hope, his message of mercy, a spiritual rebirth, and an eternal inheritance are what the Good News of the Gospel is all about. God is not out to harm you or take away your freedom. He has a plan for your life for all eternity that will bring you hope and give you a great future. Will you claim your inheritance by trusting Jesus as your Savior and Lord.