

# BLESSED BE THE GOD OF OUR SALVATION

1 Peter 1:3-5

## INTRODUCTION

- When was the last time you gazed at the stars at night?
- Instead of looking up, most people prefer to look down or around
- Our priority ought to be looking up, not just to the stars, but the One who made them, for the heavens declare his glory (Psalm 19:1)
- Following the salutation of verses 1 and 2, Peter begins the body of his letter here in verse three
- Before looking to their fiery trial, and their manifold temptations, he looks up
- And as he looks up, he breaks forth in grateful praise unto God for his mercy and grace unto undeserving sinners, just as David did in Psalm 8
- This opening benediction is identical to Paul's in 2 Corinthians 1:3 and Ephesians 1:3
- "Blessed" (*eulogêtos*), is to literally "speak well", and hence, praise, thank and glorify God
- To bless God is to "Give unto the LORD the glory due unto his name" (1 Chronicles 16:29)
- In our praises, we confer favour unto God that is his right and due, for who he is and what he has done, and he receives that blessing from us (Revelation 5:12)

- We bless, glorify and magnify the Lord, but we add nothing to him, we cannot make God greater who is infinitely great
- But he is magnified in our hearts and lives as our conceptions of him become greater, and our affections toward him become deeper, and by our making known his glorious name, causing others to also exalt him (Psalm 34:1-3)
- So, God is not changed by our blessing of him, but we are changed, and others are changed, and thereby God is glorified
- We can take this as a declaration that God is indeed blessed, or perhaps as an exhortation for us to engage in blessing God.
- This benediction is addressed to the First Person of the Godhead – the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ
- He is both the God of Christ, and the Father of Christ (John 20:17)
- Note that God is Father to Christ, and Father to the believer, but in completely different ways
- God is the Father of Christ by eternal generation; God is the Father of the believer by regeneration and adoption
- Christ always addressed God as Father during his earthly ministry, except on one occasion – on the cross when he cried, “My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?” (Matthew 27:46)
- The full name of Christ is used in v.3
  - ✓ Lord – his authority
  - ✓ Jesus – his atonement
  - ✓ Christ – his anointing

- And having exhorted us to bless God, Peter proceeds to give us one of the highest reasons we have to bless him – his mercy in giving us eternal salvation

## **I. BLESS GOD FOR OUR SPIRITUAL REGENERATION (3)**

- A. The basis of salvation is the abundant mercy of God (Titus 3:5-7)
1. Mercy is an attribute of God's character (Exodus 34:6-7)
  2. God is rich in mercy (Ephesians 2:4)
  3. Mercy is God's delight (Micah 7:18)
  4. "It is of the LORD'S mercies that we are not consumed, because his compassions fail not." (Lamentations 3:22)
  5. Salvation is according to his abundant (*polu*) mercy
    - a. As abundant as our sins are, his mercy is more abundant
    - b. Though "our iniquities are increased over our head, and our trespass is grown up unto the heavens" (Ezra 9:6), God's mercy "is in the heavens" and his "faithfulness reacheth unto the clouds (Psalm 36:5)
  6. Mercy is not receiving what we do deserve, grace is receiving what we don't deserve
  7. The penitent publican understood this when he cried, "God be MERCIFUL to me, a sinner!"
- B. The new birth is the work of God, creating life in once dead sinners

1. In our first birth, we are born in sin and spiritual death from our first father Adam (Ephesians 2:1)
2. Without the new birth, a man cannot enter the kingdom of God (John 3:3,5)
3. As Creator, he is Father of all mankind, and we all are his offspring (Acts 17:28-29), but “begotten again” applies only to those who have experienced a second birth, a spiritual birth wrought in us by God through faith in Jesus Christ (1 John 5:1)
4. Such are born, “not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God” (John 1:12-13)
5. The instrument of the new birth is the word of God (James 1:18; 1 Peter 1:23)
6. Note – God has no grandchildren

## **II. BLESS GOD FOR OUR SURE EXPECTATION (3)**

- A. As Paul is called the apostle of faith, and John the apostle of love, so Peter has been called the apostle of hope (1:3,13,21; 3:15)
- B. Christian hope is a confident expectation
  1. This “hope” does not contain the element of doubt as in our modern usage, but is a certainty based upon God’s promises (Hebrews 6:11)
  2. Any “hope” outside of Jesus Christ is a false hope (Job 8:13; 11:20; 27:8; Proverbs 10:28)

3. The Christian's hope is an anchor of the soul that we lay hold upon, and which is anchored within the veil of the heavenly temple (Hebrews 6:17-20)
4. Biblical hope is blessed (Titus 2:13), joyful (Romans 12:12), comforting (1 Thessalonians 4:13-18), and purifying (1 John 3:3)

### C. We have a *living* hope

1. It is living because it is established on "the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead" (see Revelation 1:18)
2. It is living because, unlike the dying hopes of this world that wane and pass away, it grows unto perfection (Hebrews 3:6)
3. It is living because it enlivens and vitalises those who possess it
4. It is living because it triumphs over death and the grave, crowning the believer with a resurrected body, not subject to sickness, pain or death (1 Thessalonians 4:13)

## III. BLESS GOD FOR OUR SUPERNAL ALLOCATION (4)

### A. The future glory of the believer is described as an "inheritance"

1. Peter used similar sounding words in his threefold description of this inheritance, with each Greek word beginning with "a", and ending with "ton"
  - a. *aphtharton* – incorruptible; nothing can spoil it
  - b. *amianton* – undefiled; nothing can diminish its worth

- c. *amaranton* – unfading; nothing can remove it, as it is eternal
  2. This inheritance falls under the broad term “salvation” (vv.5,9) which involves past (justification), present (sanctification) and future (glorification)
  3. This inheritance is the believer’s *right*, not through any merit of his own, but by virtue of being a child of the King, and joint-heir with Jesus Christ (Romans 8:17-18; Ephesians 1:9-12)
  4. The inheritance is Jesus Christ himself, and all the blessings promised to the believer (1 John 3:2; Colossians 3:4; Romans 8:18-23)
  5. In addition to the inheritance of all believers, there will be varying rewards given to believers according to their service of Christ in this world (1 Corinthians 3:14-15; 2 Corinthians 5:10; 2 John 8)
  6. To assure us of this inheritance, God has not only given the sure promises of his word, but he has given us the “Holy Spirit of promise, Which is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession” (Ephesians 1:13-14)
- B. This inheritance is *reserved* in heaven for the believer
1. It is “laid up” in heaven (Matthew 6:19; Colossians 1:5)
  2. As unbelievers, our rightful reserved place is a portion in hell forever (Luke 12:46), but God’s mercy annuls this and his grace grants us a reservation in the New Jerusalem

3. “So then, let ‘Deserved’ be written on the floor of hell, but on the door of heaven and life, ‘The Free Gift’” (Richard Baxter)
4. Christ, even now, is preparing a place for his chosen people (John 14:2-3)

#### **IV. BLESS GOD FOR OUR SECURE PRESERVATION (5)**

- A. It is God who keeps the believer by his almighty power
  1. The word for “kept” (*phrouroumenous*) is in the present tense, and is a military term meaning to “guard” as a sentinel (2 Corinthians 11:32)
  2. In God’s hand, we are eternally secure (John 10:28-29)
  3. It is God, not ourselves, “that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy” (Jude 24)
  4. The same God who justifies, promises to glorify those he justifies (Romans 8:30)
  5. We can have confidence “that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ” (Philippians 1:6)
- B. The day is soon coming when the awaited inheritance will be revealed
  1. It is “ready”, prepared for the day
  2. It is not yet revealed – there is much of the glory of the future state that is unknown to us now

3. But it will be revealed at the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ, “and when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is” (1 John 3:2)

## **CONCLUSION**

1. The Duke of Alva once said, “I have so much to do on the earth that I have no leisure to look up into heaven.”
2. “It is sad to think how heart and time are so taken up with earthly things that we have no leisure to look to Christ and the things that belong to everlasting peace.” (Thomas Brooks)
3. We need to continually and habitually “look up” to God in every circumstance of life
  - ✓ At the beginning of the day, look up
  - ✓ When undertaking some duty, look up
  - ✓ When making decisions, look up
  - ✓ When trouble comes our way, look up
  - ✓ When fears or doubts rise, look up
  - ✓ When conflict befalls, look up
4. The new birth is a confusing mystery to those who have never experienced it (John 3:4)
5. If you do not know personally the miracle of regenerating power of God in the new birth, then come to Christ humbly as a poor sinner for life and salvation
6. “O taste and see that the LORD is good: blessed is the man that trusteth in him.” (Psalm 34:8)
7. Do you have the lively hope of everlasting life in glory? If so, is it evident in your life, and are you proclaiming it to others at every opportunity? (1 Peter 3:15)