

Studies in 1 Peter

1 Peter 1:3-5 – Born Again to a Living Hope

Blessed Be God

Peter begins with praise for God. This is not just private worship, but it also calls upon those who are reading to share in the song of adoration. When we praise God, we speak well of him (a literal rendering of the Greek word used for “blessed” here), and we lift him up (“extol” him, see Psalm 145:1-2). We do not just praise God in prayer to him, but also in the silent meditation of our heart, in our words to others and of course in song (Psalm 145:4-7). Our praise should flow from the truth which we have learned about God, both his character (Psalm 145:8-9) and his deeds (Psalm 145:10,12).

Peter reminds us who God is – he is “the God and father of our Lord Jesus Christ”. We can know the true God and enter into a relationship with him through a knowledge of and relationship with his Son. It is God’s “great mercy” which has motivated him to act on our behalf and it is his “power” which works to fulfil his purpose.

Peter also points us to the deeds of God. Two main clauses should be highlighted. Firstly God has “caused us to be born again”, and secondly the Christians “are being Guarded”. Peter adds many additional words and phrases to these, which are colour coded on the next page.

The Christian Hope

While Peter does not elaborate on the details of the Christian hope, the New Testament does reveal several aspects of our hope that we can rejoice in.

- 1) The Christian who dies will immediately be with Christ. (Philippians 1:23-34)
- 2) Christians will be raised from the dead and taken out of this world before God’s judgement comes. (1 Thessalonians 4:13-18; 5:9)
- 3) Christians will rule in God’s kingdom on earth, which will last a thousand years. (Revelation 20:4-6)
- 4) Christians will enter into the final act of God’s plan for history, the new heavens and the new earth (Revelation 21:1-4). It is perhaps this hope, this final deliverance from sin and its consequences that Peter especially has in mind (2 Peter 3:13).

A Living Hope

Because of “the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead”, new life is given to those who put their faith in him. This new life is essential to enter God’s kingdom (John 3:3,5) and to overcome the power of sin within us (Romans 6:4,13). Christians have entered the family of God and he is now their father (Romans 8:15). New life is characterised by faith (Galatians 2:20) and evidences itself in works (1 John 2:29). But the true nature of this life is hidden, waiting to be revealed (Colossians 3:3-4).

Through their new birth, Christian’s are God’s children. They are also his heirs, and so they have an “inheritance”, which is their “hope” of “salvation”.

This inheritance is “kept” for them, and they are “being guarded” until they reach it. It will not be given to another and they will not fail to obtain it. The inheritance is “in heaven”, not on earth. And it will be revealed “at the last time”, not right now. It does not rot or rust. It is eternal. More than this, it is “undefiled” by sin. It is free from the sufferings of their present experience.

We see again that Christians are like pilgrims. They are travelling through this world, not settling for things here, but hoping for and heading towards a destination that God has promised them.

1 Peter 1:3-5

³Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ!

PRAISE FOR WHAT GOD HAS DONE

[who] According to his great mercy,

[] has caused us to be born again

to a living hope

through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead,

⁴to an inheritance that is 1) imperishable

2) undefiled,

3) and unfading,

kept in heaven for you,

PRAISE FOR WHAT GOD IS DOING

⁵who by God's power

are being guarded

through faith

for a salvation

ready to be revealed in the last time.

Colour Code:

- The purpose and outcome of God's actions
- The motivation and means of God's actions
- The quality and state of the things which God has shown to or given the Christian
- The location and timing of the things which God has given the Christian