

1 Peter 1:3-5 – Part N

1Pe 1:3 (NKJV) **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.**

As we come to [1 Peter 1:3-5](#), we need to keep in perspective that Peter is writing to Christians who were experiencing a high level of both persecution and suffering. This was no small issue to those individuals, nor should it be to any of us. One of the issues with suffering is that it can cause either spiritual growth or bitterness in the believer's life. Our response to life and all of the struggles that it often creates is what generally determines the results in our life. We could simply say that **response generally determines result**. For instance, [Hebrews 12:15](#) says,

Heb 12:15 (NKJV) **looking carefully lest anyone fall short of the grace of God; lest any root of bitterness springing up cause trouble, and by this many become defiled;**

What the author is saying is that when a root of bitterness springs up in a person's life that what has really happened is that they have “**fallen short of the grace of God**”. In other words, they have failed to respond to the very thing that they need the most – the “**grace of God**” operating in their life. The result of that improper response is often times “**bitterness**” developing in the believer's life, and the author says that “**bitterness**” causes “**trouble**” and greatly defiles the believer and many others in the process. How we respond to the difficulties and the trials that God allows in our life will always have a great bearing on the outcomes of our life.

So, what Peter does here in the beginning of this letter is to talk about how incredibly great our God is, as well as what it is that He has given to us. He says that we have a “**living hope**”, that we have an “**incorruptible inheritance**”, and that we are being kept and guarded by God's power. In v6, Peter says that we are to actually rejoice in these spiritual realities, even though we may find ourselves being “**grieved by various trials**”. Peter is clearly telling us how to respond to life, how to respond to difficult circumstances over which at times we virtually have no control. If we will respond in a certain way, then v7 says that our response to the difficult trials in our life will bring “**praise, honor, and glory**” to Jesus Christ.

I have taught it often, but perspective is everything in the Christian life. If we do not know and understand who we are and what we have as believers, then in reality we will never be able to respond to life in the way that God wants us to respond. Ultimately, it is the perspective of who we are in Christ. [1 Peter 1:3](#) says “**Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ...**” [Ephesians 1:3](#) begins in a similar way and says,

Eph 1:3 (NKJV) **Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ,**

We have to understand and appreciate that we are a unique people, we are the church - a people who have been chosen by God. [1 Peter 2:9](#) says it this way,

1Pe 2:9 (NKJV) But you *are* a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people, that you may proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light;

The spiritual reality of the Christian life is that there is no meaningful way that we can proclaim God's praises if we are always questioning and complaining about everything that happens to us. [Philippians 2:14](#) says,

Php 2:14 (NKJV) Do all things without complaining and disputing,

[Philippians 4:6](#) says,

Php 4:6 (NKJV) Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God;

You see, we have been chosen by God so that we can “**proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light**”. [Ephesians 1:6](#) says it is so that we can be “**to the praise of the glory of His grace**”. God has chosen us so that we can proclaim and declare His amazing glory and His amazing grace to the entire world! However, we can never effectively do that if we are always complaining and grumbling and whining and moaning and objecting to every little thing that simply does not go our way.

What we have already seen in [1 Peter 1:2](#) is the overwhelming reality of a sovereign God who is in total and absolute sovereign control of all things. There is not a sparrow that falls to the ground that He does not know about it. Paul probably gave the greatest single doxology in [Romans 8:35-39](#) when he declared,

Ro 8:35 (NKJV) Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? *Shall* tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? ³⁶ As it is written: "*For Your sake we are killed all day long; We are accounted as sheep for the slaughter.*" ³⁷ Yet in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us. ³⁸ For I am persuaded that neither death nor life, nor angels nor principalities nor powers, nor things present nor things to come, ³⁹ nor height nor depth, nor any other created thing, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Now, what all of this does is to actually threaten our way of thinking. It is sovereignly designed to change our worldly perspectives about life and its realities and troubles and conflicts and to cause us to marvel and glory in the greatness of our God. So, the ultimate issue that we all must face is whether or not we will actually live in the reality of what God declares in His Word, or whether we are going to live under all of the trying circumstances and trials that the world, the flesh, and the devil will bring into our life every day. Either we are a people who will sovereignly live above those circumstances, or we will be a people who become overwhelmed and crushed by them. There is very little in between the two.

It is utterly imperative and crucial to the well-being of our Christian life that we see ourselves in the way that God sees our life and that we fully embrace that reality in our Christian life. I must see myself the way that God sees me. God sees me as being fully complete and fully equipped to face every trial. He sees me as being spiritually complete in Jesus Christ. Listen again to how [Ephesians 1:3](#) expressed this amazing spiritual reality. This is a reality that every believer must fully embrace.

Eph 1:3 (NKJV) **Blessed *be* the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ,**

There is not one single spiritual blessing that God has denied to us – not one. We have already been given “**every spiritual blessing**” that God can give, and those blessings are rooted and grounded “**in Christ**”. They are all found in the person of Christ and in our relationship to Him. Any Christian will find that the success of their personal Christian life and the spiritual success of their life before both God and the world, is all deeply rooted in whether or not they truly believe that God has given to them what He says that He has given to them. I say this aggressively and uncompromisingly, but every single one of us is just a by-product of what we “really” believe about God, His Word, and what He says that we actually have in Christ. At the very base level of what it means to be a Christian, either we believe God and His Word or we do not. Either we live by His Word or we do not. Either we trust God during difficult and trying times, or we do not. Either we are practically grounded “**in Christ**”, or we are not.

So, what Peter is saying in [1 Peter 1:3](#) is no small issue. It is not something that we can just casually by-pass as unimportant to our Christian life. If I can say it this way, this is the Christian life, this is what it means to be a part of God’s church and His kingdom, this is what God expects us to learn and incorporate into our life. These great truths are not just nice anecdotal, unreliable, circumstantial hearsay. To the contrary, these ideas of our being blessed by God to “**a living hope**”, to “**an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled**”, and to “**being kept by the power of God**” are integral to the great foundational truths of the Word of God. I must see myself the way that God sees me. Perspective is everything.

The principle is simple: if a believer truly want to experience the life that God has designed for them, then it is imperative that they believe the truths of God about their life. If you want to experience God’s life, then you must actually follow Christ. Trust me, but all of this is utterly contrary to what the world will teach you. The world will teach you that you need to be on the throne of your life, that you need to do what you want to do, and that you should live the way that you want to live. Self and personal satisfaction are the great calling cards of the world, their mantra, their message. However, when we come to the Bible, the exact opposite is declared to us by God. The Scriptures declare that if a man wants to save his life that he has to lose it. The Gospels declare this same exacting truth six (6) times. As an example, [Matthew 16:25](#) boldly declares,

Mt 16:25 (NKJV) **For whoever desires to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake will find it.**

The world will never embrace the idea of you losing your life. They will never concur and subscribe to that great declaration of God. The problem is that the compromising church of the last days has bought into this worldly perspective. The compromising church and the compromising Christian simply want the best of both worlds, but God declares that that cannot happen. You cannot have heaven on earth. It is not a spiritual reality available to the believer. [1 John 2:15](#) says,

1Jn 2:15 (NKJV) **Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him.**

Every believer has to choose. Every believer has to make this choice. It is an intentional and deliberate choice and cannot be avoided. The Word of God is emphatic and relentless in declaring that living for ourselves leads to depression, despair, hopelessness, futility, misery, and ultimately to what [Romans 2:8](#) declares as “**indignation and wrath**”. In reality, what the world does is to continually distort and blatantly misrepresent what God wants me to be. It deceives us with no remorse. It says do your own thing, be your own person, live life to the fullest, just do it! God never says that. He says to “**lose your life**” for His glory, and then you will truly understand what it means to live. As a believer, I must learn to think biblically so that I can actually give the honor and the praise to Christ. Every single one of us need to remember and take notice of who we were and of what God has made us “**in Christ**”. In [Ephesians 1](#), the phrase “**in Christ**”, or a variation of it, is used fifteen (15) times. God has chosen us and predestined us to be adopted into His family so that we can live to the glory of His praise. What we want to have is a God-saturated and a God-glorifying perspective of the Christian life.

Here in these several verses of [1 Peter 1:3-7](#), Peter is just breaking forth in glorious praise for all that he knows that God has done for us and given to us. It is a spiritual reality that he simply cannot contain. He fully knows that God has done so much more for us than we deserve and in that process that He has given us so much more than we deserve. This is the correct response to theology and to doctrine. This is the correct response to God. This is the correct response for the individual believer and for the church. These are truths to which we should literally be addicted and captivated and about which we should find ourselves obsessed and passionate.

Yet, this kind of response seems virtually absent in much of Christianity and churches. Come when it is convenient, learn nonchalantly, pray seldom, study rarely, live for yourself – it is all a part of the last days’ church mindset that is so blatantly prevalent in the church today. Dr. Eddie Ildefonso has a revealing question that he often asks in some of the pastoral conferences in which he teaches. His question is this. “*If 85% of the churches in your city were to close their doors today, what would be the impact to your city?*” The most realistic answer to that question is “*nothing*”. Churches are already closing their doors to many of their services. I have never seen so many discouraged and depressed pastors. Why? It is because no one attends their services. The services are too inconvenient and do not fit into people’s busy lives. It is because the church has left its first love and has no desire whatsoever to repent of it. Jesus told the church at Sardis in [Revelation 3:1](#) that they had a name that they were alive, but that in reality they were “**dead**”. They said they were alive, they advertised that they were alive, they told everyone that they were spiritually alive, but God said they were “**dead**”, deceased, lifeless, numb, unresponsive, insensitive, and spiritually inert. In [Revelation 3:20](#) to the lukewarm church of Laodicea, Jesus is seen trying to actually get into the church! Imagine that – the head of the church standing at the front door of the church trying to get in! Do you know what God said to both of these churches? He said the following in [Revelation 3:22](#),

Rev 3:22 (NKJV) **He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.** ' ' "

Do you want to know what I think? At this point probably not, right! I believe that the issue is a lack of genuine love for Christ, an ongoing lack of love for His church, and a deep lack of conviction to fully live for His glory, praise, and honor. It is a fundamental obsession with ourselves, our lifestyles, and our lack of commitment to the living God. I am sure that will not make many friends, but I make no apology for it. I was reading recently about New York City and how 90% of the people in that city are

lost and without Christ. It is all about Wall Street and living the good life. Realistically, I would imagine that 90% is a low estimate. So, what if all the churches in that city shut down, would it really make any meaningful difference? I doubt it would even be noticed. If we closed the doors here at Chime Bell, or if William Eaves closed his doors at Pineview, or if Dr. Bob Craven closed his church doors in Lodge, or if Dr. Eddie Idefonso closed his doors in Los Angeles, or if Dr. Steve Sullivan closed his doors in Ringgold, or if Pastor Adam Hensley closed his doors in Springfield, no one would even notice. They would drive by Chime Bell, notice that no one was there, say, “Hmmm”, and just keep on driving. It seems that the only place where the church is really having an impact in the world is in those places where it is being persecuted for Christ. In a world desperate for Christ, we have become so obsessed with ourselves that we have lost all discernment relative to what really matters to God.

So, we have to ask ourselves the question – What is the constant and ongoing pattern of our life? Is it a display of praise and worship? Are we overwhelmed and infatuated by life or are we overwhelmed and infatuated by God? Is it a struggle to serve God and give our lives to God every day? Do we really have an awe of God that is both stimulating and motivating us to live for Him and to bring praise, honor, and glory to His name? These verses and these truths of [1 Peter 1:3-7](#) are a call to worship. Trust me, but the flesh has no problem attending a church service, singing songs, and talking about God, but the flesh will never want to participate in a true worship of Christ and a true service to Christ. A true and living worship of Christ is death to the flesh, so the flesh keeps finding ways to rationalize and justify why it is perfectly okay for it to personally crawl off of God’s altar anytime, anywhere, and anyway that it can. Everybody’s flesh is perfectly content with mediocrity and indifference, and it has a justifiable reason as to why it is okay for them. The flesh always justifies to us why it is the genuine exception to both obedience and commitment.

Do you know why God has given us these deep truths of [1 Peter 1](#)? It is because it teaches of the grace and glory of God. It is because we should be addicted to praise and worship for Christ and for the deep truths and doctrines of God. They are given to us so that our hearts will have a passionate and intense desire to know the living God, the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings ([Philippians 3:10](#)). He wants our minds and our hearts to be filled with His sovereign grace and to worship Him in our hearts, with other believers, and with our tongues. The overarching theme of these verses is a relentless praise to God.