

## 1 Peter 1:3-5 – Part P

**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, <sup>4</sup> to an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled and that does not fade away, reserved in heaven for you, <sup>5</sup> who are kept by the power of God through faith for salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.**

In this passage, Peter gives us three primary spiritual blessing - we have a “**living hope**”, we have an amazing “**inheritance**”, and we are being “**kept by the power of God**”. This list is different, but just as important as the one we previously studied in [Ephesians 1](#) and Peter’s list simply adds to Paul’s list.

First, Peter says that we have a “**living hope**”. The word “**hope**” is a very important biblical word, and one that is sometimes difficult to define. The reason that hope is hard to define or even explain is because it is focused on something that cannot be seen and something that is future. It is like trying to tell someone what heaven is like. In our secular culture, hope is very subjective – “I hope it will not rain”, or “I hope everything works out okay”, or “I hope that they can find a cure for cancer”. Secular hope is just “wishful” hoping without any real certainty or knowledge that what the individual is hoping for will actually ever come to fruition. It is always just relative to what someone wants, but they have no idea if it can really be obtained. However, from a biblical perspective, hope is “certainty”. Hope is a fullness of assurance that all of God’s promises to His children will be completely fulfilled. Hope is never something that is doubtful. So, as genuine believers we are fully convinced and persuaded that when we die that we will go to heaven into the very presence of God and be fully accepted without any condemnation for any of our sins or failures.

However, for the lost person, that kind of approach to life will not and cannot satisfy them. Why? It is because all that they can have is all this life can give to them. So, everything beyond this physical life and the very few short years they have is unknown and unreliable. The reality is that someone living their life without hope is incredibly despairing. Can you just imagine how the lost man feels when the doctor tells them that he has terminal cancer and only a few months to live? Listen to how Paul stated all of this in [1 Corinthians 15:19](#),

**1Co 15:19 (NKJV) If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men the most pitiable.**

Our real hope is for the future, but if an individual does not have anything to hope for in the future because they have completely ignored God, His Son, and His Word, nothing could be anymore bleak and hopeless. Life at its very pinnacle is very short and constantly full of pain and trouble. The Bible declares that our life is just a mere vapor. That is why lost people want everything that they can possibly have right now – meaning, purpose, resources, toys, things, fulfillment, happiness, riches, and peace. They want it now because they have no idea what death actually holds for them. They can whistle in the dark all they want, but they know that it is “**appointed unto men once to die and then the judgment**” ([Hebrews 9:27](#)). The problem is that in this life, all of those things just mentioned are transitory and ultimately unfulfilling. What they desire is not something that they want to wait until the future to obtain, but is something that they want now. For them, hoping for something that you cannot actually have until after you have died is not what they call hope at all. What they simply do not know or understand is that

the deepest satisfaction that anyone can have in this life is to know with certainty that they are rightly related to the eternal God through His Son Jesus Christ.

It is interesting that the word “**hope**” is only used once in the four gospels, and is used the most in Romans (16x) - which is a very doctrinal book. Spiritually, “**hope**” refers to the believer’s confidence and expectation, what they know and anticipate will be theirs in the future. “**Hope**” is a word that has to do with that which cannot be seen and that which is in the future, and honestly, it is that aspect of hope that often creates the biblical tension often found in the word. So, if we understand this word “**hope**”, it is primarily referring to something that by its very nature is dependent on the individual’s faith in someone or something that they cannot see.<sup>1</sup> [Romans 8:24](#) puts it this way,

**Ro 8:24 (NKJV) For we were saved in this hope, but hope that is seen is not hope; for why does one still hope for what he sees?**

I.e., if we already have something, then “**hope**” becomes somewhat of a moot point. So, one of the great values of “**hope**” is the actual “expectation” and looking forward to something that is an intrinsic and inherent part of it. From a purely spiritual perspective, the anticipation and expectation of what is actually awaiting the believer becomes a very critical element relative to having and maintaining endurance when undergoing a difficult trial. [Hebrews 6:19](#) actually refers to “**hope**” as “**an anchor of the soul**”, as something that sustains and supports a believer when life becomes incredibly difficult.

There are several aspects regarding our Christian hope that must be recognized. First, hope is never in ourselves and what we can accomplish or do. If my personal hope was anchored in any way to what I have personally accomplished or obtained, I would be deeply despairing and miserable. If for some reason, I found myself placing my hope before God in what I have personally done, I would be an incredibly depressed individual. If I can say it this way, **we can never do enough**. We can never pray enough, or read our Bible enough, or be faithful and committed enough. We can never witness enough. We can never give enough. We simply can never do enough. However, our “**hope**” is not anchored in what we can do, but is always centered on Christ, always anchored to what Christ has accomplished and not what we have accomplished. We are not resting our hope in what we can do, but clearly in what Christ has done and what He will do. The gospel message that we proclaim is forever a God-centered, Christ-centered message. It is never a works based message of salvation simply because we can never do enough or believe enough. That is why [1 Timothy 1:1](#) calls Christ “**our hope**”. The object of the believer’s hope is in what they know that Christ has accomplished and secured for them. [1 Timothy 1:1](#) says the following,

**1Ti 1:1 (NKJV) Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ, by the commandment of God our Savior and the Lord Jesus Christ, our hope,**

We only have “**hope**” because of what Jesus Christ has done for us. If I can say it this way, the moment that we place our hope in anything other than the person and work of Jesus Christ, at that moment we actually lose our hope. There is **nothing in the world** that can save us or give us security – no amount of good works, no government, no health care plan, no world leader, no one and not anything. Just think of all of the people who will place their hope and trust in the anti-Christ during the Tribulation, and unwittingly will take the mark of the Beast in their forehead or on their right hand ([Revelation 13:16](#)). They place their hope in the anti-Christ, take the mark, and at that very moment their eternal fate is

secured and they are eternally damned. Why? It is because they placed their hope in the wrong thing. The object of our hope is always the person and work of Jesus Christ.

Secondly, we have to recognize that the Christian’s “hope” is a gift of the Father’s grace. [2 Thessalonians 2:16](#) says,

**2Th 2:16 (NKJV) Now may our Lord Jesus Christ Himself, and our God and Father, who has loved us and given us everlasting consolation and good hope by grace,**

We only have hope because of the grace that Christ has provided. We would never believe the right things on our own. We would never understand the future on our own. We would never come to the right conclusions about life on our own. We would never live in a way that pleases God on our own. We are all desperate for the grace of God to be operational in our life. It is all because of the grace of God on our life that we have any understanding at all. Whenever we present the gospel to someone, it is a gospel of grace that has great hope associated with it. Anyone who is saved, is saved by grace alone. So, our hope for the future is simply a by-product of God’s grace in our life. For instance, Paul says the following in [Ephesians 1:18](#),

**Eph 1:18 (NKJV) the eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that you may know what is the hope of His calling, what are the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints,**

The “hope of His calling” is that “in Christ” that we have eternal salvation, will be resurrected from the dead, will be present with the Lord, and will enjoy the indescribable inheritance that Christ has secured for us. Could you imagine not having any hope whatsoever? The Greek Orthodox religion is like that. The individual never knows if they will die and go to heaven – never. Up to the very moment of their death, and beyond, their religion holds them in utter bondage to works and to fear. The Hindu caste system is like that. Once you are born into an impoverished and lower caste system, you are chained there for your entire life with no hope of ever getting out of that place. No hope whatsoever. Nothing could be more “hopeless” than to have no hope. The individual who is lost and without Christ literally has no hope of any kind. [Ephesians 2:12](#) says,

**Eph 2:12 (NKJV) that at that time you were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world.**

If a person is “without Christ” in their life, then they literally have “no hope” because they are “without God”. Life has nothing to offer but eventual death and eternal condemnation if a person remains “without Christ”. Listen to how [Titus 1:2](#) and [Titus 3:7](#) express the connection between “hope” and “eternal life”.

**Tit 1:2 (NKJV) in hope of eternal life which God, who cannot lie, promised before time began,**

**Tit 3:7 (NKJV) that having been justified by His grace we should become heirs according to the hope of eternal life.**

“Eternal life” is already ours, but the full manifestation and realization of it is something that is clearly in the future, the very thing in which our “hope” rests.

It is very important at this point to recognize the adjective that precedes the word “**hope**” in [1 Peter 1:3](#) – the word “**living**”. The word “**living**” refers to that which is aggressively and dynamically alive, a motivating and enabling principle of divine life that is always working in the believer. The hope that God gives is never dormant or stale, but is alive in us, in our heart and in our mind giving us a divine hope.<sup>2</sup> We must understand that the actual “**hope**” that we possess in Christ and in salvation is not something that is theoretical in nature or substance. To the contrary, “**hope**” is always a very confident expectation that comes from the truth of God’s Word. Without sounding arrogant, biblical hope has a certain degree of unconditional certainty to it. If we of all the peoples on the earth cannot have absolute certainty about the future realities of the Christian life, then in reality we are no different than any other bogus religion in the world. I love how Paul expressed his “**hope**” and his confidence in [Romans 8:38](#) when he said,

Ro 8:38 (NKJV) **For I am persuaded that neither death nor life, nor angels nor principalities nor powers, nor things present nor things to come,**

He said the following in [Romans 6:8](#),

Ro 6:8 (NKJV) **Now if we died with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with Him,**

There is never an air of uncertainty or doubt in anything that Paul declared. In [Philippians 1:6](#), Paul said that he was “**confident**”.

Php 1:6 (NKJV) **being confident of this very thing, that He who has begun a good work in you will complete *it* until the day of Jesus Christ;**

I love those words – “**confident, persuaded, believe**”. Those are words of unconditional certainty. They are words that carry great confidence and conviction and possess great assurance and faith. That is why biblical hope can express its reality in the believer’s life through the steadfastness and patience that it exercises in the midst of often very difficult trials and testings. It is the believer’s “**living hope**” that helps them to make it through hard times. [Hebrews 10:23](#) says,

Heb 10:23 (NKJV) **Let us hold fast the confession of *our* hope without wavering, for He who promised *is* faithful.**

We know that God is faithful, has always been faithful, and will always be faithful. We recognize that the more yielded the believer is to Christ, the greater this “**living hope**” will be effecting their life. One of the worst feelings in the world is to be without hope, to have no hope, and especially to have no spiritual hope. No matter what may actually happen to us as believers, nothing can prevent God from both practically and eternally giving to us His very best. [Romans 8:32](#) declares,

Ro 8:32 (NKJV) **He who did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things?**

We may not recognize what God allows in our life as His best for our life, but as the sovereign God who controls all things, we are always abiding in His best for our life as we yield and submit our lives to Him.

How do we make all of this practical in our life? How do we take the actual reality of “**hope**” and translate it into our life? For the lost person, time actually destroys and extinguishes their hopes. They

were looking forward to doing this or going there or having that, but as the years passed by, those dreams never materialized. [Proverbs 13:12](#) sums it up this way,

Pr 13:12 (NKJV) **Hope deferred makes the heart sick, but when the desire comes, it is a tree of life.**

When people do not get what they want, it often makes them depressed, discouraged, and sometimes difficult with which to get along. For the Christian, however, the passing of time actually makes our hope much more glorious. The closer that I get to the end of my life, the more incredible the future seems to me. When I was young, I thought that what I really wanted was what the world had to offer me, but as someone about to enter into their 7<sup>th</sup> decade of life, what the world offers me now seems fairly meaningless. However, the reality and beauty of eternity with God the Father and with Christ take on an entirely new perspective and sweetness.

Unfortunately, the world is always offering people substitutes. If you will just do this, or if you will just act this way, or if you will just change this, then everything will be great for you. However, I believe that the reality of our “**hope**” is that it is ultimately fulfilled in Christ and in our relation to Him. He is more glorious than words. He has more to give than all the world could afford to give to us. He is the only reason that we actually have “**hope**”. Our hope is in God. It is never in anything else, even when life is cruel and ugly to us. Our hope is not in men, not in what we have, and not in what we can do, but in a God who never changes, and in a God who always speaks what is true and right. [Psalm 43:5](#) says,

Ps 43:5 (NKJV) **Why are you cast down, O my soul? And why are you disquieted within me? Hope in God; for I shall yet praise Him, the help of my countenance and my God.**

We are to simply learn to rest in this great hope that is ours in Christ, learn to be content with what we have, and learn to appreciate all that God allows to take place in our life. Our hope is in God.

## **ENDNOTES**

<sup>1</sup> Strong, 1077-1078

<sup>2</sup> Wuest, 20.

## **BIBLIOGRAPHY**

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