

“The Hope of the Resurrection”
(1 Peter 1:3-5)

I. Introduction.

A. Orientation.

1. This morning, we are again remembering that event that took place almost 2000 years ago that all our hope of entering into eternal life and escaping everlasting punishment depends on: the resurrection.
2. There are, of course, other events which are equally important to the Christian faith, such as:
 - a. The birth of Jesus Christ – when He took on Himself our nature and came into this world as a man to provide a perfect obedience for us.
 - b. And the death of Jesus Christ – when He offered Himself up to His Father as a sacrifice to pay the penalty for our sins.
3. The resurrection is just as important:
 - a. Without it, we would not be able to enter heaven.
 - b. Without the resurrection there would be no eternal life, only eternal death, eternal punishment.
 - c. Paul writes, “But if there is no resurrection of the dead, not even Christ has been raised; and if Christ has not been raised, then our preaching is vain, your faith also is vain. Moreover we are even found *to be* false witnesses of God, because we testified against God that He raised Christ, whom He did not raise, if in fact the dead are not raised. For if the dead are not raised, not even Christ has been raised; and if Christ has not been raised, your faith is worthless; you are still in your sins. Then those also who have fallen asleep in Christ have perished. If we have hoped in Christ in this life only, we are of all men most to be pitied” (1 Cor. 15:13-19).
 - d. The fact that He was raised from the dead means at least three things:
 - a. First, that the Father accepted what Jesus did. If He hadn’t, He would have left Jesus in the grave – If Jesus’ sacrifice hadn’t cancelled out the guilt He bore on the cross, He would still be under the power of death.
 - b. Second, that Jesus, in His death and resurrection, conquered death for us – death can only hold those who are guilty; if that guilt is removed, death no longer has any power over us.
 - c. And third, that Jesus is our only hope of overcoming death – no one else has been able to take away sin, besides Jesus; and so He is the only One who can overcome death for us.

B. Preview.

1. This is why Peter draws our attention to the resurrection, even as Paul did: the resurrection offers us hope: our only hope of overcoming death and finally entering into heaven; which is why we should embrace that hope through faith

in Jesus Christ and bless the Father for His mercy in providing Christ for us, as our passage calls us to do this morning.

2. Let's consider what Peter has to tell us for a few moments, and perhaps we'll see this more clearly.

II. Sermon.

A. First, Peter calls on you to bless God for what He has done through Jesus Christ. But so you won't misunderstand which God you are to bless, Peter tells you: "The God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ."

1. There are several things that set the true God apart from the so-called gods of this world.
 - a. For one thing, He exists, while all the other gods don't.
 - (i) God Himself says, "Is there any God besides Me, or is there any *other* Rock? I know of none" (Isa. 44:8).
 - (ii) The fact that He's real while the others are not sets Him apart from every other conceivable god.
 - b. Second, He is Triune.
 - (i) He eternally exists in three persons, though He is only one God.
 - (ii) He is Father, Son and Holy Spirit, all of whom are equal in power and glory.
 - (iii) That's why when Jesus sent His disciples out to make more disciples, He told them to baptize those who believed in the name of the Triune God, "Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit" (Matt. 28:19).
 - (iv) All the other gods of this world – which don't exist – are one person, while God is three persons.
 - (v) The Father is mentioned here as God because He represents the three persons in the work of redemption.
2. He is also distinguished by being the One who sent His Son, Jesus Christ, into the world to provide life for whoever would believe in Him.
 - a. Jesus, who is the eternal Son of God, became *fully man* for your salvation; which is why the Father is called *His God*.
 - b. But He is also called His Father because the Son of God was eternally begotten of the Father and begotten in time by the Spirit of God in the womb of the Virgin Mary.
 - c. No other god has such a Son, nor has sent such a Son into the world for your salvation.
 - d. Peter tells you that it is this God, the Triune God of the Bible, the One who sent His Son into the world to save you, that you are to bless.

B. What does it mean to bless God?

1. Peter is saying that you are to confess in the presence of His people and everyone else in the world that He is worthy to be praised.

2. This is what it means to glorify Him: You are to see what He has done for you and give Him the credit/honor for it.
- C. Why are you to glorify and bless God? What has He done for you? Peter tells us that He has done at least three things:
1. If you're a believer here this morning, God has caused you to be born again.
 - a. To be born again means that God has made you alive when you were spiritually dead.
 - b. He has opened your eyes and changed your hearts, so that you see the beauty and glory of God, you love what you see in Him and in what He has done.
 - c. This is something God did, not you.
 - (i) He's the One who sent you His Word to enlighten you.
 - (ii) He's the One who sent you His Spirit to change your heart.
 - (iii) He's the One who changed the direction of your life, otherwise you would still be heading towards hell and not concerned that you were.
 - (iv) You should bless Him for this mercy.
 2. Second, you are to glorify God because He has caused you to be born again to a living hope.
 - a. He hasn't given you a dead hope like that of the Pharisees who hoped they would get into heaven by the fact they were born in the line of Abraham or because of their supposed good works.
 - b. This isn't a dead hope like that of the Jehovah's Witnesses or the Mormons or Muslims, which is dead because what they believe isn't true.
 - c. This is a hope that is alive because it's real and based on the work of a living Savior.
 - (i) It is the hope that you will not receive what you deserve.
 - (a) Most people believe they already deserve heaven.
 - (1) They believe they have done more good than bad.
 - (2) They believe God will overlook their few really bad mistakes.
 - (b) But God tells you that you deserve hell. Why?
 - (1) Because when Adam rebelled against God in the Garden and was sentenced to death, he did this for you – he was your representative.
 - (2) Because since you came into the world, you have done nothing but sin.
 - (3) Because your good works aren't really good – you can't do them with the right heart – out of love for God – or with a right motive – for God's glory alone. That's why Paul tells us, "There is none who does good, there is not even one" (Rom. 3:12).
 - (4) This is why you deserve hell – which is not a place where people can do all the sinful things they might want to do in this life, but a place of unbearable and everlasting torment.
 - (5) God has given you a living hope, the hope that you won't get what you deserve, for which you should bless Him.

(ii) But it is also the hope that you will receive instead what Christ deserves. Peter tells us about it in verse 4.

(a) Instead of receiving hell, you have the hope that you will receive heaven as your inheritance.

(b) Heaven is far better than the best you have here.

(1) You will eventually lose everything you love here.

(A) Those you love will eventually die.

(B) The things you treasure the most will eventually decay.

(C) You will have to let these things go when your time is over.

(2) Heaven is different: the things there will never decay or decompose, and you will have them forever.

(A) Heaven is a world filled with love.

(B) There you will enjoy the love the Father, the Son, the saints and angels have for you, and the love you have for them. You will be swallowed up in everlasting joy, the greatest pleasure you could ever know.

(C) It's a holy pleasure that will never end.

(D) This is the living hope for which you should bless God.

3. And third, you are the glorify God because His giving you this living hope is an act of great/infinite mercy.

a. This is the point behind God giving you hope instead of certain death.

b. When God doesn't give you what you justly deserve, that is mercy.

c. And when He gives you infinite blessedness in the place of infinite punishment, that is infinite mercy, for which you should bless Him.

D. How has God provided this living hope? Peter tells us that it's through the resurrection of Jesus Christ: "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, 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" (v. 3). We saw at the beginning why the resurrection is important.

1. Paul told us that without the resurrection, there would be no salvation, only eternal punishment: "If Christ has not been raised, your faith is worthless; you are still in your sins" (1 Cor. 15:17).

2. The resurrection was God's acceptance of Christ's sacrifice: the sins He carried on the cross for those who trust Him were forgiven.

3. Christ conquered death in the resurrection: death is the penalty of sin, but if He paid for sin, death can no longer fasten its hold on Him or on you.

4. Christ has become the only way that you can overcome death, because He is the only One who has conquered it: If you want to live, you can only live through Him.

5. If you have received His life through His resurrection, you should bless God for this hope He has given you.

- E. The final question Peter answers is, To whom does this blessing apply? Who will actually inherit eternal life?
1. Peter says you will, *if* you trust in Jesus: This blessing is “for you, who are protected by the power of God through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.”
 - a. It only applies to those who have faith.
 - (i) “For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that *whoever believes* in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life. For God did not send the Son into the world to judge the world, but that the world might be saved through Him” (John 3:16-17).
 - (ii) “*Believe* in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved” (Acts 16:31).
 - b. You must trust in the Lord Jesus Christ – in His obedience, death and resurrection – alone for your salvation, and not in anything that you have done.
 - (i) “For as many as are of the works of the Law are under a curse; for it is written, ‘Cursed is everyone who does not abide by all things written in the book of the Law, to perform them.’ Now that no one is justified by the Law before God is evident; for, ‘The righteous man shall live by faith’” (Ga. 3:10-11).
 - (ii) “For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, *it is* the gift of God; not as a result of works, so that no one may boast” (Eph. 2:8-9).
 - (iii) Saving faith is not only knowing the truth, and believing it’s true, it is also putting your whole hope of heaven in the work of Christ alone.
 2. You must also turn away from your sins.
 - a. “Now when they heard *this*, they were pierced to the heart, and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, ‘Brethren, what shall we do?’ Peter *said* to them, ‘Repent’” (Acts 2:37-38).
 - b. You must own that you have disobeyed God, grieve over your sins because you have offended Him, and turn from them into the path of obedience.
 - c. If you do, not only will you be delivered from punishment, but God will keep you from perishing by the power He has to do whatever He wills: He will make sure you enter into heaven, if you trust in His Son.
 - e. Do you have this living hope this morning? The hope that comes only through the resurrection of Christ?
 - (i) If you don’t, then trust in the Lord Jesus now and turn from your sin – He won’t turn you away, but will welcome you to Himself.
 - (ii) But if you do have this hope, then bless God, for He has done this for you. Amen.