

# Living Here, Longing for Home: Living Hope

## 1 Peter 1:1-12

Read 1 Peter 1:1-12 together:

*Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ, to those who are elect exiles of the Dispersion in Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia, according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, in the sanctification of the Spirit, for obedience to Jesus Christ and for sprinkling with his blood: May grace and peace be multiplied to you. Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! According to his great mercy, he has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance that is imperishable, undefiled, and unfading, kept in heaven for you, who by God's power are being guarded through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time. In this you rejoice, though now for a little while, if necessary, you have been grieved by various trials, so that the tested genuineness of your faith- more precious than gold that perishes though it is tested by fire- may be found to result in praise and glory and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ. Though you have not seen him, you love him. Though you do not now see him, you believe in him and rejoice with joy that is inexpressible and filled with glory, obtaining the outcome of your faith, the salvation of your souls. Concerning this salvation, the prophets who prophesied about the grace that was to be yours searched and inquired carefully, inquiring what person or time the Spirit of Christ in them was indicating when he predicted the sufferings of Christ and the subsequent glories. It was revealed to them that they were serving not themselves but you, in the things that have now been announced to you through those who preached the good news to you by the Holy Spirit sent from heaven, things into which angels long to look.*

### INTRODUCTION & BACKGROUND

The Apostle Peter writes this epistle circa 62 A.D. while in Rome. He writes to churches in the area which is now modern-day Turkey. As Peter writes to these churches, he anticipates this letter will be circulated among the churches in that area.

In verse 5, Peter reminds these Christians they are living in the last days, awaiting the “last time.” Peter is writing to the living church, but also to the waiting church!

In verses 1&2, Peter has some unique descriptions of these Christians, who and what they are, and the times they are living in.

- ? What words/descriptors does Peter use in referring to these Christians?
- ? What is the significance of these descriptions?
- ? Have you ever been in a foreign culture and met someone from “home”? What did you experience in that meeting?

The context in 1 Peter fits exactly with ours today. We feel spiritually displaced. We feel we are becoming increasingly more alien to this land and our country. We are learning what it truly is to be sojourners and aliens. This letter helps us navigate our new identity, our new status. But this letter is not defeatist, battle-weary, or bitter. Rather, Peter lifts high a banner that declares: banner of Living Hope!

Peter points to hope that is not grounded in human efforts. It is not reliant on transforming power structures. It is not dependent upon raising the poverty level. The foundation for this living hope is the fact of Easter! The victorious resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead is the cornerstone of our living hope.

Do we need hope? Do you wonder if you are a candidate for this hope? Peter addresses 5 rhetorical questions in response to your question, “Am I a candidate for living hope?”

### **Does God know where to find me?**

In verse 2 Peter provides an answer to this question. Read 1 Peter 1:2.

- ? What is the “foreknowledge of God?” What is its extent? Is it limited?
- ? Thinking very personally now, when did God’s foreknowledge about you, specifically, begin (Psalm 139)?

O LORD, you have searched me and known me! You know when I sit down and when I rise up; you discern my thoughts from afar. You search out my path and my lying down and are acquainted with all my ways. Even before a word is on my tongue, behold, O LORD, you know it altogether. For you formed my inward parts; you knitted me together in my mother's womb.

I praise you, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made. Wonderful are your works; my soul knows it very well. My frame was not hidden from you, when I was being made in secret, intricately woven in the depths of the earth. Your eyes saw my unformed substance; in your book were written, every one of them, the days that were formed for me, when as yet there was none of them.

There is great hope in knowing that our omnipotent, omniscient Father infallibly knows EVERYTHING! He knows every choice you will make; He knows every pain you will feel; He knows every joy that you will ever experience. And, He has known all of this since before you were born.

### **Have I been born again?**

In verse 3 Peter says that these Christians had been “born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead.” No amount of effort, no religion, no spiritual safari will get you into the family of God! You must be born again.

- ? Do you know what it means to be born again?
- ? Read Ephesians 2:12. How does the Apostle Paul describe life without Jesus?

Our hope is in the resurrection of Jesus Christ. The certainty of Christ’s resurrection not only points to His victory over death, but that victory also extends to those who trust in Him.

### **Do I have trouble?**

In verses 6&7 Peter admits that we are grieved by trials and our faith is tested. We are seeing the reality of trials and persecution for our beliefs. Living with a biblical worldview will always be in conflict the world’s cultural orientation.

- ? Have you faced persecution or tribulation for standing for the faith?
- ? How did you find the strength to stand?

### **Do I have a longing for home?**

In verses 8&9 Peter reminds us of the final outcome of our faith, namely, the salvation of our souls. We love Who we have not seen; we trust in what we cannot see. We straddle these two worlds of the “already” and the “not yet.” In Christ, we are already a new creation and have eternal life. But we have not been fully recreated (given our sinless body) nor will this mortal body live forever.

- ? So, how can we embrace our status as new creations here and now?
- ? How should this change the way we view this world and our “home” in it?
- ? How can we orient our mindset toward our ultimate outcome?

### **Do I recognize my privilege?**

In verses 10-12 Peter reminds us of the privilege we have in living after the cross and the empty tomb. We have the Holy Spirit indwelling us as Christians and we have the completed canon of the Scriptures.

- ? What does Peter say about the Old Testament prophets?
- ? How about the angels? What does Peter say regarding angels?

We see more clearly than Moses or Daniel or Isaiah! These great servants of God served us. And God in His infinite wisdom allows fallen humans to carry this treasure of salvation. Paul tells us in 2 Corinthians 4:7 that we carry this treasure in jars of clay to show (prove) that the surpassing glory belongs to God and not to us.

What hope! We have a Father who knows us, who found us in our sin, who has regenerated us, who gives us a longing for heaven, and who has granted us great privileges. Live in this great, living hope!