

Speaker: Pastor Buster Brown

Today's Message: The Living Hope Which Sustains in Dark Places

Today's Text: I Peter 1:3-9

“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, 4 to an inheritance that is imperishable, undefiled, and unfading, kept in heaven for you, 5 who by God's power are being guarded through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time. 6 In this you rejoice, though now for a little while, if necessary, you have been grieved by various trials, 7 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. 8 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, 9 obtaining the outcome of your faith, the salvation of your souls.” **I Peter 1:3-9**

Peter is writing this heaven-saturated, Hope-filled book to believers who are facing unjust reviling, hardships and societal marginalization.

“Keep your conduct among the Gentiles honorable, so that when they speak against you as evildoers, they may see your good deeds and glorify God on the day of visitation.” **1 Peter 2:12**

“...having a good conscience, so that, when you are slandered, those who revile your good behavior in Christ may be put to shame.” **1 Peter 3:16**

Blessed be! _____ Because of His great mercy. _____ Born again to a living Hope.

The inheritance is

- 1) Imperishable.
- 2) Undefiled.
- 3) Does not fade away.
- 4) RESERVED in heaven.
- 5) GUARDED by the power of God by FAITH.

A disciple is a forgiven sinner who is constantly learning Jesus in repentance and FAITH.

Faith is the continual looking to the mercy of Christ.

“But you have exalted my horn like that of the wild ox; you have poured over me fresh oil.” **Psalm 92:10**

“...but they who wait for the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings like eagles; they shall run and not be weary; they shall walk and not faint.” **Isaiah 40:31**

“And without faith it is impossible to please him, for whoever would draw near to God must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who seek him.” **Hebrews 11:6**

Regarding Trials

1) The believer is not removed from the realm of suffering.

“For the bread of God is he who comes down from heaven and gives life to the world.” **John 6:33**

2) Trials last “for a little while” or “if necessary”.

“For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worth comparing with the glory that is to be revealed to us.” **Romans 8:18**

“So we do not lose heart. Though our outer self is wasting away, our inner self is being renewed day by day. For this light momentary affliction is preparing for us an eternal weight of glory beyond all comparison, as we look not to the things that are seen but to the things that are unseen. For the things that are seen are transient, but the things that are unseen are eternal.” **2 Corinthians 4:16-18**

“...for you know that the testing of your faith produces steadfastness. **4** And let steadfastness have its full effect, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing.” **James 1:3-4**

3) Trials prove the genuine nature of personal faith; of faith which will result in praise, glory and honor at the 2nd coming of Christ.

4) Trials should not be wasted. Trials can either sweeten us, as we trust in the Lord, or cause us to become bitter.

Heidelberg Catechism

Question 1: What is your only comfort in life and death?

Answer: That I am not my own, but belong with body and soul, both in life and in death, to my faithful Saviour Jesus Christ. He has fully paid for all my sins with his precious blood, and has set me free from all the power of the devil. He also preserves me in such a way that without the will of my heavenly Father not a hair can fall from my head; indeed, all things must work together for my salvation. Therefore, by his Holy Spirit he also assures me of eternal life and makes me heartily willing and ready from now on to live for him.

We should take our CUE from the response of God's people to trials:

C= Character Building

U= Understanding

E= Empathy

QUESTIONS

- 1) Why is the book of 2nd Peter and the message of the Bible impossible to understand unless we grasp the "otherworldly" nature of the message?
- 2) What is "soft persecution"?
- 3) What do we say to people who deliriously say, "I don't think I will be able to keep going" (in this trial or hardship)? *Answer: You are guarded by the power of God as you look to the reality of Christ.*
- 4) What did Pilgrim discover regarding the fire in the House of the Interpreter in *Pilgrim's Progress*?
- 5) What are some of the various trials that Christians experience in our culture?
- 6) What does 2 Corinthians 4:16-17 tell us about trials and hardships?
- 7) What are the only 3 things that are not "fading away"?