

Resurrected Hope – 1 Peter 1:1-12
Sermon – Pastor Joe Davis
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INTRODUCTION

Do you have HOPE today? If you do, WHY? Why do you have hope? What is it based on? Does it have a foundation? Do you have reasons to believe your hope is more than just wishful thinking? And what are those reasons? Humans need hope in order to keep going and not self-destruct in a world that's so full of pain, heartache, disappointments, and ultimately death for every one of us. Hope is an essential ingredient for human life, and those who lose it either find ways to medicate and numb the pain, or ultimately resort to suicide if they conclude that all hope has been lost. We are always looking for hope, and if it's ever fully lost, we're in a very dangerous place where anything could happen.

But do you know that the worldview currently being promoted and pushed on the world everywhere we turn is the most hopeless worldview that's ever existed? If you stop and think about it, random chance and accident and humans as animals and no design, no purpose, no absolute truth, is about as hopeless as you can get. All that we're left with is: eat, drink, and do what makes you feel good or feel like a good person, for tomorrow we die. And what is "good" anyway? And what is "right" in a world where there's no basis for right and wrong? And does any of it really matter if there's no accounting of it when we die? And what do we do when the hard times come in life and nothing feels good anymore? Or when I discover that I'm actually not a good person? I'm actually quite self-centered and have often hurt other people in order to get what I wanted? Hope can disappear in a hurry with this worldview!

And what if this worldview being pushed by the world is wrong? What if the design, the order, the life we see all around us in the universe is shouting something to me? What if it's telling me that, just as every house has a builder, the builder of all things is actually God? And what if this God has been seeking to communicate with me all my life through the glory of his creation, through my conscience, and through his written words contained in the best-selling book of all time? And what if he's actually doing all this because he personally created me

and is giving me life right now; he loves me; and he wants me to have relationship with him...where I can have hope and purpose and his power and presence with me every moment? And what if this is what I've really been looking for all my life? And what if I don't need to be afraid of death anymore at all, because it will be the moment when the best of the best begins...when I come into my true inheritance and the life I've always dreamed of unfolds before me?

This is hope with a foundation, my friends...a living hope backed up by so much evidence and by the most well-documented miracle of all time: *the bodily resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead*...the miracle we're celebrating today! The world will always tell you to look for hope elsewhere, and they'll give thousands of ways to do it. But they all turn out to be shadows, lies, illusions that have no foundation and will ultimately disappoint us every time, though they may feel good for a while. And they do nothing to provide peace and assurance for that most troubling of realities that awaits all of us someday: our own DEATH.

For those of you just visiting today, we've been studying the book of 1 Peter in our sermons for the past couple of months and have just finished verse 12 of chapter 1. And what we've seen in these verses is HOPE...a hope that's alive and life-giving...a hope that's come to us through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead. You see, the bodily resurrection of Christ has shown us that he is also able to raise each of us from the dead. If he hadn't conquered death himself, he wouldn't be alive today and thus wouldn't be able to conquer death for us either.

How does he conquer death for us? Well, first he brings us from death to life spiritually as we come to him in repentance of sin and faith in his work on the cross...this is what the Bible calls being born again. It happens at the moment we surrender to Jesus as Lord and Savior. At that moment, he takes us from being dead in sin and rebellion against God to being alive spiritually and at peace with God, forgiven of our sin and able to walk through life in relationship with him and equipped with his power.

But Jesus' conquering of death for us doesn't stop there. He will also one day raise our physical BODIES to life when he returns and his salvation is fully revealed for all to see. And our new bodies won't be just ordinary, earthly bodies. They will be perfect bodies that will no longer grow old or get injured or get sick, but will be ready for eternal life in God's presence. Perhaps they will have some of the

characteristics of Jesus' resurrected body...able to eat food, to touch and be touched, to walk and run, but also able to pass through walls and ascend into the clouds! Is anybody ready for their glorified body yet?! Jesus, the Life-Giver, conquers death and brings us into abundant life...a hope-filled life with God that starts now and will unfold fully in all its glory at his return.

Well today, in the remainder of our time, I want to paint a picture of this hope-filled life from our study of 1 Peter so far. If you have a Bible today, turn with me to 1 Peter chapter 1, verses 1 to 12. For those of you who've already been through these first twelve verses with me, this will serve as the sealing of the concrete foundation Peter has already laid. It will help solidify the worldview he's given us that will be the basis for everything else he tells us in this book. Notice that the very next word Peter writes in verse 13 is: THEREFORE. In other words, based on what I've just shared with you in verses 1 through 12, this is how it should affect your daily lives. So it's very important that we have a full grasp of what he's taught in these first 12 verses.

But for those of you just visiting today, I pray you'll get a fresh picture of the hope-filled life God offers to all through Jesus Christ, a life flowing out of a worldview that's in sharp contrast to what's being promoted in most of the world today. And maybe you'll decide you want to come back next week to learn more!

Now the way I'm going to do this today is a little different from what I usually do. We'll begin by reading 1 Peter 1, verses 1 through 12. Then I'll share with you 7 slides up here on the PowerPoint that will summarize the key aspects of the hope-filled worldview Peter presents to us in these verses. So, let's begin by reading verses 1 through 12 of 1 Peter chapter 1:

¹ Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ, to those who are elect exiles of the Dispersion in Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia, ² 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.

³ 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.

⁶In 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.

¹⁰Concerning this salvation, the prophets who prophesied about the grace that was to be yours searched and inquired carefully,¹¹ inquiring what person or time the Spirit of Christ in them was indicating when he predicted the sufferings of Christ and the subsequent glories.¹² 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.

May the Lord bless the reading of his Word.

So did anything in these verses strike you as different at all from the way most people live their lives? How about all of it?! Let's see if we can summarize the key aspects of this hope-filled worldview...the worldview of a born-again follower of Jesus Christ.

SLIDE PRESENTATION:

According to God the Father's abundant mercy...

We've been born again to *a living hope* THROUGH the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead.

We've been sprinkled with Jesus' blood and begun a life of obedience to him by the power of the Holy Spirit.

We're pilgrims temporarily living in a foreign country – this world is not our home – with our hope set on the imperishable, undefiled and unfading inheritance being kept for us in heaven.

We're being guarded by God's power through faith and receiving multiplied GRACE and PEACE.

Holding tightly to faith, we experience joy even in trials, knowing they have a purpose and will make us like Christ and prove our faith to be genuine and worth more than gold.

WE have a great salvation that when understood and lived will lead us to speak the good news of Christ to others by the power of the Spirit.

APPLICATION AND CONCLUSION

Now this great salvation that brings us to this hope-filled worldview doesn't come to us automatically. It comes to us only as we accept the gift God is offering us through Jesus Christ. It's no use to us until we accept the gift and unwrap it. It's possible that there's someone here today who's ready to accept and unwrap this gift, this great salvation, this living hope, this peace-filled life with God, or someone wants to make sure that they really have. So let me briefly share with you how you can do that and why Jesus is the only doorway to peace with God. Holy Spirit, do your work here today. This is the story of Scripture about humanity and God's rescue plan for them. In it is the gospel, the good news, which the Bible describes as *the power of God for the salvation of everyone who believes in Jesus*.

Here we go:

Our disregarding of God and our unbelief in him has broken our relationship with him and separated us from his love and presence. It has caused us to be under his wrath and judgment because we're suppressing the truth about him and refusing to give thanks and glory to the very One who created us, is giving us life every day, and is right now holding the entire universe together by his power. Yet still God loves all people and feels great mercy for them, even when they're actively rebelling against him and suppressing his truth. And he wants everyone of them to be reconciled with him, forgiven, and living life with him the way he intended.

To make that possible for every person, God the Father sent his only Son, Jesus Christ, to live life on earth as he intended every person to live...in humility and dependence on God, following him and giving him the glory he deserves. In living this way perfectly as a human being during his 33 years on earth, Jesus became qualified to step in as our substitute...the one who would take our place and pay the penalty a holy and just God must provide for sin, injustice and rebellion against him. Jesus became our substitute by unjustly dying on the cross for our sins, receiving the wrath of God we deserved, and then rising from the dead on the third day victorious over sin and death, proving the penalty had been paid in full.

Now his good news to all – the message followers of Christ are entrusted to share with the world – is that every person can now be forgiven of their sin, stripped of their shame, and given new spiritual life and peace with God, by simply repenting of their sin and placing their faith in Jesus Christ, ready to follow him. Repenting of sin is simply acknowledging to God that you have sinned and rebelled against him and that you want to change. Faith in Christ is simply expressing and believing in your heart that Jesus died for your sins and rose from the dead, and asking him to save you and take charge of your life from here.

And when you do this, you become born again in an instant – God gives you a new heart as he brings you to life spiritually; your sin is forgiven forever; your shame is removed; God permanently adopts you as his child; he gives

you his Holy Spirit to be with you and in you forever;...and you begin a new life of resurrected hope at peace with God – a life where you learn to follow Christ, live in step with God’s Word, and accomplish God’s good purposes on earth by his power.

If you’re ready for that transformation today, would you be courageous enough to come up here so we can pray this simple prayer together and you can testify to others that you’re ready to be reconciled with God and to begin a new life of following Christ?

A Prayer to Accept God’s Salvation through Christ

God, I’ve sinned against You and I want to change.
I want your forgiveness and unchanging love.
Jesus, I believe You died on the cross for my sins
And that You rose from the dead.
I receive You as my Lord and Savior.
I invite You to take charge of my life from here.
Teach me to live life with You and like You
By the power of Your Spirit.
Thank you for saving me. Amen.

This is the only sure hope available in the world today. The only hope that amounts to more than passing pleasures, creative theories or wishful thinking. The only one founded on a person who was resurrected from the dead. If you want resurrected hope that will see you through the hardest times this life can bring; if you want hope that’s certain; if you want hope that’s alive and life-giving; look no further than Jesus Christ. He’s the way, the truth and the life and no one comes to the Father except through him (see John 14:6). His name is the only name by which we must be saved (see Acts 4:12). He’s the author of life itself and he gives eternal life to all who call on his name (see Romans 10:13).

And for those of us who’ve already accepted God’s gift of salvation and new life through Christ, let’s live it to the fullest as we embrace God’s good purposes for us in this life, as so powerfully presented by Peter. And let’s speak to others this resurrected hope we have at every opportunity! Peter will show us what this kind of life looks like and how we live it as we continue on in this powerful book.