

Lesson 1

Lesson 1: 1 Peter 1:1-12

One of the important things to remember as we begin 1 Peter is that Peter is writing to believers who are scattered throughout the Roman world and living as exiles. Some of the language Peter uses is heavily connected to the Old Testament and to God's dealings with Israel, but Peter is not merely writing to ethnic Jews. He is writing to Christians who belong to God and who often feel out of place in the world around them.

Peter begins by reminding believers that God has caused us to be born again into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ. Take note of how it is God who is doing all of the verbs in this passage. God saves us. God gives us hope. God grants us an inheritance. God guards us through faith. Peter's emphasis is not on what believers have done for God but on what God has done for believers.

One of the things Christians sometimes forget is how great and amazing the promise of salvation is. We often think about salvation only in terms of forgiveness, and while forgiveness is wonderful, Peter says God has done far more than simply erase our sins. God has adopted us into His family and reserved an eternal inheritance for us. This inheritance is imperishable, undefiled, and unfading. Everything we value in this world eventually wears out, breaks down, or is taken away. The inheritance God has prepared for His people can never be lost.

Remembering and holding tightly to this truth is important because Peter is teaching us where our hope should be found. The Christian's ultimate hope is not a comfortable life, financial security, popularity, success, or earthly satisfaction. Peter is not expecting believers to build their hope on the things of this world. Instead, he points them toward an inheritance that cannot be touched by death, sin, or time itself.

This is why Peter points to the promises of the gospel that are found in our faith being more valuable than gold. Gold is valuable because it can acquire things that people want. Gold can provide comfort, security, influence, and opportunity. But there are limits to what gold can do. Gold cannot forgive sins. Gold cannot reconcile a person to God. Gold cannot secure eternal life. Gold cannot guarantee an inheritance that lasts forever. When he says that it is more important than gold he might as well mean all of it not just the little bit that we might have or wish to have, but it is better for us to have the gospel and its promises than to have all of the gold in the world. And it is that great gospel that allows for us to overcome the crucible of trials.

Adding to the idea of testing us though the crucible of trials can be somewhat of a harder pill to swallow. This is why it is so important that we understand the end goal that God has in mind. The purpose of a trial is not simply to make life difficult. Peter compares faith to gold being refined in a fire. Just as fire reveals whether gold is genuine and removes impurities from it,

trials reveal what we truly trust and often expose areas where our faith still needs to grow. When life is comfortable, it is easy to say that Christ is our greatest treasure. Trials often reveal whether that belief is genuine. When comfort disappears, do we still trust Christ? When our plans fall apart, do we still trust Christ? When something we deeply value is threatened or taken away, do we still believe that Jesus is enough? In many ways, trials expose what we really love. They reveal whether our confidence is resting in Christ or in something else. This is why Peter sees tested faith as something to celebrate rather than merely endure.

In verses 10-12 Peter reminds believers that the salvation they have received is not just something incredible that God decided to do one day but that the prophets spent centuries looking forward to it. Men like Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Daniel spoke about God's coming salvation long before they fully understood how it would unfold through Christ. They were serving future generations, including believers like us, by recording God's promises.

Peter goes even further. He says that even angels long to look into these things. Peter wants his readers to realize how privileged they are to live on this side of Christ's death and resurrection. For hundreds and even thousands of years people lived and died not fully knowing the great work that God one day would do. God chose for us, not angels, but us to grace with getting the opportunity to have the fullness of salvation revealed.

Main Point

Because God has given believers a living hope and an eternal inheritance through Christ, they can rejoice even in trials knowing that their faith is more precious than gold and that the salvation they have received is more valuable than anything this world can offer.

Questions

1. What has God caused believers to be born again into?
1. How does Peter describe the inheritance believers have received?
2. Where is this inheritance being kept?
3. How are believers being guarded according to verse 5?
4. What does Peter say believers may experience for a little while?
5. What comparison does Peter make between faith and gold?
6. What does Peter say believers do even though they have not seen Christ?
7. What do you think Peter means by a "living hope"?

8. How is a living hope different from the hopes people usually place in this world?
9. Why does Peter describe the inheritance as imperishable, undefiled, and unfading?
10. What does it mean that believers are "guarded through faith"?
11. Why would Peter say that faith is more precious than gold?
12. How do trials reveal whether faith is genuine?
13. Why is it significant that believers love Christ even though they have never seen Him?
14. What is Peter trying to communicate when he says that even angels long to look into these things?