

Small Group Guide: Our Living Hope

Based on 1 Peter 1:1-5

Opening Prayer

Begin your time together by thanking God for His great mercy and the living hope we have through Jesus Christ.

Ice Breaker

Share about something you once considered valuable that you've since lost or that has deteriorated over time. How did that loss affect you?

Key Sermon Points

1. Praise God for Our New Life Received (v. 3)

- Rooted in God's great mercy
- Result of God's sovereign initiative
- Produces a living hope through Christ's resurrection

2. Praise God for Our Inheritance Waiting (v. 4)

- Personally ours as believers
- Imperishable, undefiled, and unfading
- Permanently reserved in heaven

3. Praise God for Our Salvation Secured (v. 5)

- Guarded by God's omnipotent power
 - Appropriated through faith
 - Awaits its final revelation
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Discussion Questions

Understanding the Text

1. **Read 1 Peter 1:1-5 together.** What stands out to you most from this passage? Why?
2. Peter addresses believers as "elect exiles." What does it mean to be an exile? How should this identity shape how we live in our current culture?
3. The sermon mentioned that God's mercy is given "in proportion" to our need, not just "in portion." What's the difference? How does this change your understanding of God's mercy?

Going Deeper

4. **Verse 3 speaks of being "born again to a living hope."**
 - How would you explain being "born again" to someone unfamiliar with Christianity?
 - What makes our hope "living" compared to the world's hopes and wishes?
5. **The inheritance described in verse 4 has three characteristics: imperishable, undefiled, and unfading.**
 - Contrast this with earthly inheritances or treasures. What examples from your own life illustrate how earthly things perish, become defiled, or fade?
 - How does knowing about this heavenly inheritance change your perspective on material possessions?
6. The sermon stated that "the inheritance is Jesus Christ" Himself. How is Jesus our ultimate inheritance? What does this mean practically?

Personal Application

7. **The sermon mentioned that believers are "guarded by God's power through faith."**
 - What current circumstances in your life make you feel vulnerable or unprotected?
 - How can this truth about God's guarding power encourage you this week?
8. Peter wrote to people experiencing persecution and loss. Many were losing homes, families, and livelihoods.
 - What "securities" in your life are you tempted to trust more than God?
 - How can you practically shift your confidence from earthly things to God's promises?

9. **The sermon emphasized that "this world is not our home."**

- In what ways do you find yourself living as if this world IS your permanent home?
- What would it look like to "live light" in your current season of life?

Reflecting on Worship

10. **Verse 3 begins with "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ."**

- The sermon suggested we should say this with emotion and enthusiasm. Why is it sometimes hard to worship God enthusiastically?
- What truths from this passage most move you to praise God?

Key Takeaways

- **We are chosen by God** according to His foreknowledge and set apart by the Spirit for obedience to Christ
- **God's mercy is proportional** to His infinite resources, not limited to our small expectations
- **Our hope is living** because it's rooted in the resurrected Christ, not dead wishes or fading dreams
- **Our inheritance is secure** in heaven, guarded by God's omnipotent power, not subject to earthly decay
- **We are exiles here**, passing through this world with our eyes fixed on our eternal home

Practical Applications

This Week's Challenge

Choose one of the following to practice this week:

1. **Memorize 1 Peter 1:3-5** and meditate on it daily. When anxiety about earthly circumstances arises, recite these verses.

2. **Conduct a "treasure inventory":** List the things you're currently investing most of your time, money, and emotional energy in. Honestly evaluate which are eternal and which are temporary. Pray about one adjustment you could make.
 3. **Practice "living light":** Identify one material possession or earthly security you're holding too tightly. Take a practical step to loosen your grip (give something away, simplify an area of your life, etc.).
 4. **Share your hope:** Have a conversation with someone who doesn't know Christ about the "living hope" you have. Share what difference it makes in your life.
 5. **Write a eulogy of praise:** Following Peter's example in verse 3, write out your own "Blessed be God..." statement, listing specific reasons you praise God for His mercy, your new life, your inheritance, and your secure salvation.
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Prayer Focus

Praise: Thank God for His great mercy and the living hope we have through Christ's resurrection.

Confession: Confess ways you've placed your security in earthly things rather than in God's promises.

Petition: Ask God to help you live as an exile with your heart set on your heavenly inheritance.

Intercession: Pray for group members who are facing trials, that they would experience God's guarding power and find their confidence in Him.

Looking Ahead

Next week we'll look at verses 6-9, where Peter addresses how our faith is tested through trials. Come prepared to discuss:

- What trials are you currently facing?
 - How do you typically respond when life gets difficult?
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Closing Prayer

Close by praying 1 Peter 1:2 over your group: "May grace and peace be multiplied to you."

Additional Resources

- Read Ephesians 2:1-10 for more on God's mercy and our salvation
- Read John 3:1-21 (Jesus and Nicodemus) for more on being "born again"
- Reflect on Colossians 3:1-4 about setting your mind on things above