

- Peter is writing to encourage all believers in general ... He means for his letter to be read in churches and copied by trusted people, and then sent out to other churches who repeat the process ...
 - What if Peter is writing in response to a letter he's received, or personal conversations with other believers, or verbal reports concerning Christians who are suffering for their faith ... Possible questions and concerns:
 - *This world seems to be spinning out of control. Rome is literally on fire and chaos is the norm. How do we endure through this, Peter? How do I lead my family? How do I respond to the evilness around me?*
 - *I'm trying to faithfully stand for Jesus but it's getting harder. Others oppose me with threats; hardship surrounds me – my profession, my faith, my well-being. Peter, remind me that the loss of everything is worth it in the end.*
 - Peter is no stranger to such concerns – many of his own are recorded in the gospel accounts ... He knows first-hand their current struggles – as he understands ours, too ... He reminds us – 4:12, 5:9 ...
 - **How much more does God**, who knows every detail concerning all things, understand our every concern in life ... **He has committed Himself** to bringing us across the finish line – 5:7, 10 ...
- As a Christian, then, **what is to be our steadfast assurance in life and death?** ... *Heidelberg Catechism Q1: That I am not my own, but belong with body and soul, in life and in death, to my faithful Savior Jesus Christ ... 1:3-5 ...*
- In love, the Father chose you to be saved through the work of Jesus Christ ... Then the Trinity set into motion the plan to achieve this according to God's **faithful love** ... Scripture describes this **mercy** as being **persistent** and as **unconditional tenderness** – Tts3:4-5; Heb4:16 ... **God's abounding faithful love CAUSES us to be born-again** ...
 - He causes us to be born-again BECAUSE He first chose us to be born-again ... Our new birth is brought about according to His own affection for us ... And as result of the finished work of Christ ... We're no more able to bring ourselves to new life than we're able to bring ourselves out of our mother's womb ...
- We are born-again **into a living hope** ... Biblical hope: **guaranteed reality that is not yet fully experienced** ... Biblical hope is not based on situations or circumstances, nor feelings or experiences ... Hope remains settled even when we're unsettled ... It remains firm even when we're weak ... It remains faithful even when we wrestle with questions ... Hope is given to us by God and not mustered up by our own doing ... **The source of our hope is always Jesus**
 - We're born-again to **a living hope of resurrection** ... And our resurrection is grounded in the resurrection of Jesus Christ ... Thus, our Hope is in a Person – a Living Person ... This is why **Hope endures unchanged** ... *Thomas Brooks: Hope can allow us to see heaven through the thickest of clouds* ... Peter uses present tense, meaning this living hope is to be a continual, abiding reality for us
 - God works through His word and Spirit to strengthen and grow hope within us ... He works through each of us to encourage one another with the Gospel, and to instill further the truths of the Gospel ... It is this hope Peter calls us to testify about when asked by others (3:15) ... Notice Peter says, **at any time** – meaning when all is good, and when all is not good ... **The situations change, but the Hope remains the same** ...

- We are born-again **into an inheritance** – an **inheritance of glory** ... The word Peter uses for inheritance speaks of **what a child receives from parent, property they live on and will one day possess as their own** ... As expressed in the word hope, this inheritance is **a guarantee not fully experienced** ... **Eph1:14** – Holy Spirit is our downpayment
 - Those in Christ receive this inheritance **BECAUSE** God's faithful love assigned you to receive it ... When He chose to bring you to new life in Christ, He also chose you to **share in an inheritance of glory** – eternal life and blessed perfection, enjoying the fullness of God's presence and greatness ...
 - **Receiving this inheritance does not depend on your merits** ... It's a done deal, when you by faith were joined to Christ in salvation ... *Are you capable of keeping this inheritance from becoming defiled? Are you able to keep it so as not to lose any of its beauty or wonder or majesty? NO!* ... Not one of your own merits can achieve this ... **Only God Himself can keep this inheritance for us**, and if He keeps it for us, then we're assured to receive it when the time comes ... This is the emphasis of **vs4-5**
 - He is persevering what is being kept so that it remains unchanged
 - He personally sees to it that you attain what He has promised to you
- The Father chose to save you and make you His child ... Then He sent Christ to fully accomplish salvation, so that by faith in Christ you became God's child ... Then both sent the Holy Spirit to fully apply and seal salvation, so that what the Father had purposed would be brought to full completion (**Eph1:3-14**) ... As Peter says, **"this is the true grace of God. Stand firm in it!"** (5:12) ... **This is our steadfast assurance in life and death**