

1 Peter 1:13-21
A Life Full of Hope

For the past few weeks we have been celebrating the 500th Anniversary of the Reformation at Oxford Baptist Church. October 31, 1517 was only the beginning of the Protest and in many ways the Reformation is ongoing and will be continual until Christ comes. We can be certain of this due to the substance of the Reformation – God’s Word. The Reformation is ongoing because we are always conforming ourselves to the Word.

The Reformation was a recovery of the Gospel of Grace, a recovery of the good news of God’s salvation in Christ for us. So, I want to extend our series concerning the Reformation for the next three weeks coming off the heels of *Soli Deo Gloria* to look at what kind of difference the gospel makes. I guess you could say that I want to answer the “so what?” question. We will look at three areas, our attitudes first, our expectations next, and then our every endeavor.

Turn to 1 Peter. We have been looking at 1 Peter 1:3-12 and for these next weeks that we are here, I want to round out the remaining part of chapter 1 and then move into chapter 2. But today I want us to look at 1 Peter 1:13-21.

READ TEXT
PRAY

What difference does the glorious salvation of Christ make? Let’s make sure that we are understanding what we mean when we use such a lofty phrase as “glorious salvation of Christ.” When we ask what difference does this make, we are asking “What does the purpose and plan of God’s free gift of grace to save sin enslaved sinners make?” That is what we are asking. The short answer is EVERYTHING, but we have to be more specific.

I hope that you are considered the difference the gospel makes. I hope that you have heard the gospel of grace. I hope that everyone within the sound of my voice understands the implications that the gospel has on every part of your life. Often, I am convinced that many treat salvation as simply a one-time deal. Or worst, a one time a week deal. One of the hallmarks of the reformation was to cast despair on the Roman Catholic idea of Penance and swing the pendulum back towards gospel centered Repentance. The difference is a living a life motivated by the kindness of God that is pleasing to God and one that works had to please God and always finds itself failing. Do you see how Roman Catholic many Baptists you know still are? Luther said that he preached justification by faith alone – the gospel of grace - to his people each week because each week they forgot. I want you to see the difference between the gospel bringing about only a temporary change and the gospel bringing a forever and definitive change. One enslaves and is not the gospel. The other liberates and is good news.

The temporary change is summed up like this – if I do more, God will be pleased with me (penance); vs, because of Christ, God is pleased with me, now I do what I do to delight in his

delighting in me (gospel-driven repentance). One is driven by external ritual, the other by internal renewal. I Listen to the first 3 of the 95 Theses

1. When our Lord and Master Jesus Christ said, ``Repent" (Mt 4:17), he willed the entire life of believers to be one of repentance.
2. This word cannot be understood as referring to the sacrament of penance, that is, confession and satisfaction, as administered by the clergy.
3. Yet it does not mean solely inner repentance; such inner repentance is worthless unless it produces various outward mortification of the flesh.

Listen closely. The hope of the gospel is not to make bad people good; the hope of the gospel is to make dead people live. Look at how verse 13 begins. *Therefore*. That word is always a connecting word and I want to draw your attention to the *what* it connects to, because it connects to the heartbeat of the gospel of grace. When we follow the life-line back we notice that the first word of verse 13 connects to everything that came before from 3-12. The gospel indicatives – realities that are now true of us on account of Christ - compel, or propel our actions. The indicative before the imperatives. The gospel of grace is radical and transforming.

Let's follow the text together. Let's just connect verses 3 with verse 12. Verse 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....* Verse 12, *Therefore, preparing your minds for action, and being sober-minded, set your hope fully on the grace that will be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ.* Here is the message that we have to see: The what has been accomplished for us so that who we are is mentioned first which leads into the what we do. As Schaeffer famously asked, "How Should We Then Live?" Our disposition is always one of responding to the God of grace.

If we don't get this right then we lose the gospel – we are justified because of Christ's work. As Paul said, we have been crucified with Christ. It is no longer we who live but Christ who lives in us. [But listen] The life that we *now* live we live in the flesh in faith in the Son of God who loved us and gave himself for us (Gal. 2:20). Our devotion to Christ is always the consequence, not the cause, of justification. This is the heartbeat of the Christian religion, the heartbeat of the Reformation.

The real controversy of the Reformation is not Scripture, Christ, Grace, Faith, or God's glory, the real controversy is a single word that links them all together – *Alone*. Some may accuse us of making mountains out of molehills. But I hope that you will see the importance of this gospel-centered disposition. Does it really matter? Is one word worth all the trouble of controversy. Let's ask it a different way, let's make it more personal. Would you say that a truthful answer to this question matters: What happens to me when I die? What about this one, How can I be made right with God? Or, Can I have any assurance of salvation? Can I ever lose my salvation? Do those questions matter? If they do, then the one word *Alone* matters.

Listen, the Bible is more than a book of morals. Christ is more than someone worth imitating. The Bible is a book of salvation and Christ is our Savior and Lord who has accomplished what we were left incapable of accomplishing ourselves. And his accomplishment is the hope of the world, my hope, your hope, our hope! He wants us to live a life full of hope. Not just a hope for a moment but a hopeful or hope-filled life. This is the gospel, this is the message of our text in Peter this morning.

Very briefly, I want to give you three truths from this text that show you that Christ is calling us to a life full of hope.

1. Christ Has Given Us a Life of Hope

I love the way that verse 13 begins. Verse 13 links what Christ has done for us and shows us what we are now to do. This is the work of God in Christ, to give us life so that we can live. Very quickly Peter wants us to know that the salvation that God has secured for us means that we need to get to it – get to living this life that he has called us to. And, from the text, there is much that he has called us to.

The first thing that we see is God calling us to *prepare our minds for action*. Literally this means to “gird up our loins.” This term is our way of saying, “roll up your sleeves.” It is the same way of speaking that God gave to the Jews when he was about to deliver them from Egypt. *Prepare your minds for action* don’t waste any time, instead get to work. Then Peter says, *be sober-minded*. What does he mean here? The rest of the verse tells us. Don’t be fooled by the trickery of the world that lives for fleeting moments, instead live in the light of eternity today. And the last of Peter’s commands says it best: *As obedient children....* This one really sets our focus. I want to come back to it in the second point but let me just say this now. Remember the words of Christ. Twice in Matthew, once in chapter 18 and then in chapter 19 Jesus says that the way that we come to him is as children. What does this mean? If we are going to be children of God then as children of God we are characterized by one thing – obedience. The root of delightful obedience - trust.

Before we move on to our second point and the rest of the verses I want to say, we can’t emphasize this point enough – our life is a life responding to his grace. Look back at verse 5. God’s power is guarding us in a certain way. Which way? Faith. What is faith? Faith is this firm belief in what God says over what we see or feel. Faith is the undercurrent of our life that keeps pulling us out to the eternal sea of God’s joy. Faith is not inanimate, faith is something that lives and breathes. Listen to this verse from Ephesians. *For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, not a result of works, so that no one may boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.* (Ephesians 2:8-10) That verse captures this thought well. Christ has given us life and in this life, we hope. Hope is then our way of life, we get to live a life full of hope, this is good news.

And the news keeps getting better. Look at verse 17. Probably our first glance at this verse sends a shiver down your spine. It should, but that is not all it should do. We aren't talking about duty this morning we are talking about delight. As John tells us in 1 John 5:1-3

Everyone who believes that Jesus is the Christ has been born of God, and everyone who loves the Father loves whoever has been born of him. By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God and obey his commandments. For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments. And his commandments are not burdensome.

Verses 17-19 gives us joy because they remind us that

2. Hope Has Come from Hopelessness

The thought of verse 17 flows from verse 13 which begins with *obedient children* and confronts us with a new way of thinking. There was a former way of thinking that we all had, a way that Scripture calls over and over again *ignorance*. The word used here is the word where we get our word agnostic from. Who is an agnostic? An agnostic is one who doesn't know, they are ignorant. That doesn't mean that they are excused, it just means that their life is without knowledge. That's a scary way to live.

In contrast to ignorance, look at what we know. We know we have one in heaven whom we get to call Father. This fact both comforts us and centers us. It is comforting to call him Father and centering to know that our Father is Lord and judge of the universe. There is both this approachableness and reverence for God that we carry with us forever. This awesome God has called us to himself to be his, to be holy just as he is holy, to have our temporary lives now imitate eternity until finally he comes and transforms the temporary into the eternal. We are always aware of this and are controlled by this. As we wait for him, we trust him, we worship him, we fear him, and our lives prove it because we are his.

This is our motivation, look at verse 18 and 19. We have been ransomed, again a reference back to Exodus where God redeemed his people from the bondage of Egyptian slavery. But this time our redemption came at a great cost, the precious and spotless blood of the lamb. What were we ransomed from? Don't miss this. We were ransomed from a hopeless life to a life filled with hope!

This is the Christian message – HOPE! And look how God secured our hope – the Sending of the Son to die and be raised again. Christ is both the securer of our hope and the centerpiece of our hope. Christ has both given us life and is our life.

3. We Hope in His Glory

Look at verses 20-21. I love that the apostles can't say enough about Jesus. The early church used to call the Gospels "The Memoirs of the Apostles." Jesus has come, death has lost, life has won, no wonder they couldn't get over him. How could anyone if they ever knew him? My Great Grandmother was Leena Williams Haynie. She was born in 1900 and died in 1992. She

was a God-fearing woman who could rattle the house with her prayers. In 1901, she traveled from Oklahoma to Monroe, Louisiana and boarded a train and headed to Newnan, GA where she and her family settled. One day my Mother was going through a trying time and Maw Haynie came to her and said, “Honey do you know Jesus?” My Mom said to her, “I used to know Jesus but I’m just not sure.” Maw Haynie looked at Mamma and said, “Oh honey, if you ever knew Him, you’ll always know him.”

Isn’t that true? Listen to these verses again, start in verse 18:

...knowing that you were ransomed from the futile ways inherited from your forefathers, not with perishable things such as silver or gold, but with the precious blood of Christ, like that of a lamb without blemish or spot. He was foreknown before the foundation of the world but was made manifest in the last times for the sake of you who through him are believers in God, who raised him from the dead and gave him glory, so that your faith and hope are in God. (1 Peter 1:18-21)

Listen to me. If you aren’t hoping in his glory, you have no hope at all. But, if you are hoping in his glory then you have nothing but hope! And oh, what a hope it is – the hope of GLORY.

Post Script:

Luther’s words to his congregation:

“When the devil throws our sins up to us and declares we deserve death and hell, we ought to speak thus: ‘I admit that I deserve death and hell. What of it? Does this mean that I shall be sentenced to eternal damnation? By no means. For I know One who suffered and made a satisfaction in my behalf. His name is Jesus Christ, the Son of God. Where he is, there I shall be also.’”