

1-27-2018

[00:00:13] Morning church.

[00:00:15] Warning those of you here in the sanctuary others over in our baker center maybe you're joining us online. So nice that it's not snowing today. We've had a lot of snow in the last couple of Saturday nights. In fact last Saturday night I had been away at some meetings from Wednesday through Saturday night in Phoenix Arizona.

[00:00:41] I know sorry about that. It was really nice out there. 72 often but san no humidity in fact 2 which was really nice. Not a cloud in the sky now that we think about it.

[00:01:01] But I knew when we left on Wednesday the weather forecast didn't look great for the weekend and by Friday they put Baltimore we were flying in and out of Baltimore they put it on there kind of their watch list for Southwest Airlines because they weren't quite sure where that line would be. And I had asked Adam Keith Pastor Adam if he would be willing to at least be on call.

[00:01:25] And so when they made that move I just called at him and said Let's let's do this thing or have you didn't not him do such a great job last Sunday. Yes.

[00:01:36] So good.

[00:01:37] Chris shaded preaching on what it means to be powerless and yet how God uses our powerlessness for His glory. And it's really a great tap into what is happening Monday nights in Celebrate Recovery in at 7:00 in our student center. Just to put that out there again. It is great times of worship. Great opportunities to hear testimonies and then to get into some conversation and community regarding whatever it is you may be struggling with so great job Adam. And so any way we ultimately did get back in safely in the middle of the night early Sunday morning but procreated out I'm taking that. So we are making our way through first and second. PETER In fact I'm going to ask you if you would please turn in your Bibles to first Peter. Chapter 1 it's right towards the very end right before we get to Jude revelation first Peter chapter 1 and as you're turning there may be on your handheld. Let me just ask you isn't it good to just take some time this morning in our worship and being here in the presence of the Lord to just look up. I mean that's really what we've been doing these last twenty five minutes here of this worship service.

[00:03:05] It's looking up. We need to look up because when we look out and when we look at the world around us and watch the news it is it is distressing.

[00:03:19] Quite honestly the division the strife the what's happening in our world the breakdown of so many things and yet it is so good to be here and to look up to praise the Lord to spend time in his presence to be reminded that this world is not all that there is at all that this world's temporal it's tied to time in it's passing away but we gather today to celebrate eternal things heaven glory the love of God the salvation of Jesus that he pours out on us.

[00:04:01] And let's take a look at first Peter I just want to dig back in. It really kind of launches us into our text this morning which is verses 3 through 5. But let's just once again take a look at verses 1 and 2 Peter an apostle of Jesus Christ to God's elect exiles scattered throughout the provinces of Pontas glacier capital SEIA Asia Bethania who have been chosen according to the fore knowledge of God chosen according to the fore knowledge of God the Father through the sanctifying work of the Holy Spirit to be obedient to Jesus Christ.

[00:04:45] Do you see it. It just jumps off the page. The Trinity I notice the word Trinity doesn't

appear in Scripture. It means tri unity. The fact that we worship a God who is three persons one essence God the Father God the Son God the Holy Spirit and we see it so clearly right here in this text chosen according to the fore knowledge of God the Father through the sanctifying that means purifying indwelling setting apart presence of the spirit. This is our gift as children of God to have in us the very presence of the Holy Spirit of God to be obedient to Jesus Christ and sprinkled with his blood that points us right to the cross of how Jesus died on the cross gave his blood so that we would be forgiven.

[00:05:42] Right here is the gospel right here is the trinity and we see Peter describing these things to those what scattered them he screwed this over just a bit to those who are scattered throughout these various provinces. I come back the fact that if you don't know very much about the Bible you read these words these places and they don't really mean very much we don't know where these things are so just to put it up again on a map. I love maps so we've got modern day it'll leave Greece down here. Right. The Aegean Sea Black Sea. This is modern day Turkey Syria Lebanon on Israel right here between the Sea of Galilee and the Dead Sea Sinai Peninsula the Nile basin of Egypt and then northern Africa. OK so when he writes this letter these are five provinces.

[00:06:40] Think of them as states in what was then. Well this whole area kind of was called Asia or thought of as Asia Asia obviously has moved away off here to the east but at the time of the first century Pontas glacier capital S.A Asia and Ruthenian. Peter is writing this letter from Rome in 63. In the year 58 57 58 Nero became the Emperor.

[00:07:07] We've heard of Nero. He was one of the one of the well-known emperors of the Roman Empire. But when you hear Nero let me tell you the word on which of the name I want you to think of. I want you to really equate Nero with a man that has been in the previous generation called Adolf Hitler. Very similar very similar. And in the same way that Adolf Hitler had a hatred for those of the Jewish race and he he wanted to annihilate them right.

[00:07:39] The Holocaust and not just in Germany Nazi Germany but as the Empire spread.

[00:07:45] It was his goal to eliminate all Jewish people as well as others not just the Jews caught the brunt of his hatred but they certainly were his heated hatred and as the Nazi empire spread so did this hatred of and his persecution of the Jews.

[00:08:06] Well that's what's happening. Nero is in Rome and he is now spreading this hatred towards not Jews but to Christians. Christianity has been around now for about 30 years. Jesus rose and ascended in about 33A.D. so 30 years later by this point Christianity is now spread widely throughout the Roman Empire and now Nero is turning his hatred on the Jews in fact look at verse 6 they're of Chapter 1 in all of this you greatly rejoice though now for a little while you may have to suffer grief in all kinds of trials. That's kind of the context of this letter. Grief and all kinds of trials suffering persecution is now emanating out into where you live throughout the Roman Empire. And I would add another word to this and it's the word marginalization because those who claim to be followers of Jesus not only were going to be persecuted trials of many kinds but marginalized put out to the very edges of society.

[00:09:26] And I don't have to preach too long about this.

[00:09:29] For us to see this exact thing happening in our world in our world where those who are followers of Jesus who believe that the word of God is Truth and contains truth and and that we can't just make up the rules as we go. We can't make ourselves the center of what is right and what is wrong. There is an authority that comes from beyond us higher than a supernatural. That describes what's right and what's wrong and we believe that God's word is truth. Well I'll tell you

what you hold to that belief in our society.

[00:10:11] Marginalization it's happening at rampant speed in our.

[00:10:18] Think of how things have changed even in the last two or three years.

[00:10:22] So Peter he's writing this letter to those persecuted marginalized throughout the Roman Empire and he has three things he wants to say to them I'll keep coming back to these three things. One is identity. You have to know who you are. You have to know who's your identity. Second of all response How do I respond Where do I fit in a world that is so quickly changing and this is so relevant for us. And thirdly future Peter wants to remind them over and over and over again of their future and what he's saying is this world is not your home. Jesus is coming back. You don't live here if you're a follower of Jesus. You are now you know an alien a stranger in this world navigating a world that is no longer your home. What is our future. And as I think about how Peter then enters into this letter where is the stark. Given all of this as kind of the context of what's happening and Peter is widely known to be the rock of the church the Epistle or not the Epistle the Apostle. I know I get that right. The one that was recognized as kind of the head of the church and you think about Peter writing this letter and. And how does he start and I would think he would start after this two verse greeting kind of with this idea of you should or you must or you are think of his passion for what it means to be a Christian. And I just can hear Peter I would think he would kind of start. This is what I would expect you should be ready. You must know prepare yourselves you are and I think of this kind of like a parent was kind of envisioning Peter like a parent writing this letter.

[00:12:21] And how are we as parents if you're a parent. Do you ever hear these words coming out of your mouth. Right. You should. You must. You are special to me. You be careful.

[00:12:34] You know it's kind of this out of fear almost worry and yet as we look at how Peter begins this letter how he is an apostle of Jesus Christ and his position and you know his relationship with God his being a best friend to Jesus and then kind of writing this letter to those scattered and Kabat SE Asia Pontas Glachan. This is how I would think he would start. I've received these things from God.

[00:13:08] Now I'm writing them to you you need to you should you are this field but that's not how this letter starts at all.

[00:13:19] In fact I'm going to flip it around because Peter inversed 3 after the initial greeting what we're looking at today he doesn't go this way at all. He goes this way.

[00:13:31] He looks up and he in fact then says praise be to the God and Father who loves you who has called you who has made you his child who has adopted you. So it's not a you should it's Thank you God. His whole view is looking up. Look at it there verse 3.

[00:13:54] Praise be to the God and Father of Our Lord Jesus Christ praise looking up. Oh god you are so good. This word praise what he's doing here. It comes from a Greek word the Greek word is Doxa D O X a Doxa means glory. But it's it was used as a as an exclamation.

[00:14:24] How I remember this so clearly is when I was in seminary I had to take Greek language Greek biblical Greek learn try to learn try to learn how to read Greek and our seminary professor.

[00:14:35] The man that was teaching the class he loved the word Doxa fact often throughout the class he would say Doxa and everyone in the class would have to shout back glory. And it's this

response.

[00:14:49] Glory Doxa. In fact we take out of that the word the modern day word Doxology a glory saying how many of you growing up sang If you were in the church.

[00:15:02] I know some of you didn't grow up in the church but if you did.

[00:15:05] Did you ever sing the song the doxology anyone.

[00:15:11] Praise God from whom all blessings flow.

[00:15:17] Praise Him all creatures here below. Praise Him above ye Heavenly Host Father's Son and Holy Ghost.

[00:15:35] I pitched that really high I'm usually pretty good at that but anyway once you get started you gotta roll with it.

[00:15:44] The doxology it's this declaration of glory praise you.

[00:15:51] God this is exactly how Peter begins this letter.

[00:15:55] Yes he's writing to those that are going to experience persecution yes he's writing to those that he knows are going to be marginalized but he doesn't start as a parent saying be careful.

[00:16:05] You should look out. He says no. Praise God. Praise be to the God and Father of Our Lord Jesus Christ and just so we're crystal clear on which God we're worshipping. He's the father of Jesus Christ. The father of Jesus. Four times. Look at it in the first three verses four times. Peter uses the name Jesus Christ.

[00:16:38] He wants us to be crystal clear who he's worshiping an apostle of Jesus Christ obedient to Jesus Christ the godfather of our Lord Jesus Christ the resurrection of Jesus Christ. PRAISE BE TO THE God and Father of Our Lord Jesus Christ.

[00:17:00] Out of the father's great mercy in his great mercy.

[00:17:06] This is Peter thanking God praising God for his great mercy to all of us in his great mercy I want you to understand how clear this is in the New Testament how our position as followers of Jesus as Christians children of God adopted children of God. It is out of the mercy of God the kindness of God. Turn with me quickly to Ephesians Chapter 2.

[00:17:35] I want you to see this Galatians Ephesians Philippians Colossians so if you're in the G PC area Ephesians Chapter 2.

[00:17:48] This is now Paul writing the emphasis but it's exactly the same Gospel the message as for you.

[00:17:56] Paul writes Ephesians 2 Verse 1 as for you you were dead in your transgressions and sins in which you used to live when you followed the ways of this world.

[00:18:06] He's talking to everyone. Paul as he saying before you became a child of God you were of this world. You thought like this world you were part of this world system and of the ruler of the Kingdom of the he's talking of literally Satan the spirit who is now at work and those who are

disobedient all of us also use or lived among them at one time we gratified the cravings of our flesh and we followed its desires and thoughts like the rest we were by nature deserving of wrath. We serve a righteous and holy God and he cannot abide evil in his presence. But verse 4 because of his great love for us God who is rich in what. Mercy made us to live with Christ even when we were dead and our transgressions understand that that God speaks life into our.

[00:19:06] Dead being our dead soul our dead spirit what we do is respond that's how salvation happens.

[00:19:15] We never can earn our way to God.

[00:19:19] It is God in His mercy and love speaking into our hearts. When I was born again at the age of 8 I still remember sitting there in a church service and I sensed God stirring in my little guy heart. And I responded to that stirring. I came forward I said yes that's how everyone comes to faith in Jesus. It is a response in faith to the love of God.

[00:19:45] We never initiated God always initiated because of his great love rich and mercy. God made us alive with Christ even when we were dead. It is by grace you have been saved. God raised us up with Christ and seated us with him in the heavenly realms in Christ Jesus in order that in the coming ages he might show the incomparable riches of his grace expressed in his kindness to us in Christ Jesus for it is by grace you have been saved.

[00:20:17] Turn with me to Titus.

[00:20:18] Go forward about 0 5 20 pages tightest Chapter 3 Titus Chapter 3 same message Chapter 3 Verse 3 at one time we two were foolish disobedient deceived enslaved by all kinds of passions and pleasures that may be you here today.

[00:20:41] You may be walking in or listening online and you feel literally enslaved by all kinds of passions by addictions by things that you cannot seem to break free of we lived in malice and envy being hated and hating one another.

[00:21:01] But Verse 4 when the kindness and love of God our Savior appeared he saved us not because of righteous things we had done. Same message but because of his mercy. He saved us through the washing of rebirth by the renewal by the Holy Spirit whom he poured out on us generously through Jesus our savior so that having been justified by his grace we might become heirs having the hope of eternal life that is that's the New Testament message.

[00:21:35] That is the gospel that in his great mercy God has given us. That is the root our identity as Christians is completely rooted in God's mercy and in his love and out of his love for all of those who believe in and trust and are adopted by him through faith. We receive gifts. And Peter here as he's giving this Doxology thanking God for His goodness. He describes three very important gifts that come to us as children again. This is Peter praising God who pours himself into us. The first gift is a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ.

[00:22:24] A living hope through the resurrection of Jesus. I'll just point out that Peter himself experienced hope because of the resurrection.

[00:22:33] I mean literally think of Peter the night that he betrayed Jesus when Jesus was being tried there in front of paunches pilot.

[00:22:41] Peter was in the courtyard and he denied three times even knowing Jesus and he left and

went out into the darkness. And Jesus went to the cross and and Peter would have stayed there if it were not for the resurrection. But that changed everything when he ran into the empty tomb and saw that Jesus was alive and then later was able to touch Jesus and have a conversation with Jesus.

[00:23:07] Peter himself was reborn into a living hope because of the resurrection and so are we this living hope you know one of my very favorite songs that has come about this last year is called Living Hope living based on this verse.

[00:23:27] I was pretty amazed that it's not even been around for a year.

[00:23:32] It was first sung by Phil Wickham last March 30th at his Good Friday service living hope and I wanted you to hear we sang it last Sunday or you did.

[00:23:45] I wasn't here long but I want you to hear these words.

[00:23:50] Just listen to the gospel that is so present in these words how great the chasm that lay between us how high the mountain I could not climb. In desperation I turned to heaven and spoke your name into the night. Then through the darkness your loving kindness tore through the shadows of my soul. The work is finished. The end is written. Jesus christ my living hope. Who could imagine so great a mercy one heart could fathom such boundless grace. The God of ages stepped down from glory to where my sin and bare my shame. The cross has spoken. I am forgiven the King of Kings calls me his own beautiful savior. I'm yours forever. Jesus Christ my living hope. Then came the morning that sealed the promise. Your buried body began to breathe out of the silence. The roaring lion declared the grave has no hold on me. Hallelujah praise the one who saved my soul and set me free. Hallelujah. Death has lost its grip on me. You have broken every chain. There's salvation in your name Jesus Christ my living hope.

[00:25:16] I love that. That's the gospel.

[00:25:20] That's the message that we believe in that we hold to this is the gift that is ours a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead.

[00:25:32] Second of all we're given the gift of a lasting inheritance that can never perish spoil or fade. Oh this is the great hope of of the gospel as well we have an inheritance. This world is not our home. We have no idea what lies in store for his children.

[00:25:55] Oh it is so good. And I'm going to tell you right now if if you haven't thought of this lately. Life is short life is short it's short we are not promised tomorrow. And yet we have a lasting inheritance.

[00:26:15] Paul says in Romans 8 15 the spirit you received brought about your adoption to son ship and by him we cry Obba father the spirit himself testifies with our spirit that we are God's children.

[00:26:31] And if we are children then we are heirs heirs of God and co heirs with Christ.

[00:26:38] We have so much to look forward to. And thirdly we have a coming salvation that is ready to be revealed in the last time Jesus is coming back.

[00:26:52] He's coming back.

[00:26:55] His salvation is coming for all. And this phrase in the last time I don't know if we're in

the last time but I think we may well be in fact second Peter.

[00:27:12] Chapter 3 I one should have. I'm sorry second Timothy. Chapter 3 Second Timothy Chapter 3 describes the last time and I want you to just listen to what Paul says here to Timothy.

[00:27:27] The first five verses of second Timofey three and I want you to just think about the day in which we live. All right Mark this Paul says there will be terrible times in the last days the last times people will be lovers of themselves. Lovers of money boastful proud abusive disobedient to their parents ungrateful unholy without love unforgiving slanderous without self-control. Brutal. Not lovers of good treacherous rash conceited lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God.

[00:28:16] Having a form of godliness but denying its power and I don't know about you but my heart broke literally broke this last Tuesday. When I saw a bill being signed in the state of New York allowing babies in the womb up to birth to be killed and what really struck me was in this picture that I saw of them signing this bill into action was it looked like they were at Disneyland. They were gleeful joyful celebrating this signature.

[00:29:05] This bill that had been passed in the state of New York to literally a baby up to the point of birth when I think about this world that we live in.

[00:29:23] I think about this list and second Timothy 3 but you know a church. I also think about this gift coming salvation that is ready to be revealed and the last time three questions. Who are you.

[00:29:40] Where do you fit. And what's your future.

[00:29:47] To which all of this is wrapped in what Peter says right. Praise God praise God that in his great mercy and out of his love for us he has given us a new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead into an inheritance that can never perish. Spoiler faid kept in heaven for us as we are shielded by faith for the coming salvation that is being revealed ready to be revealed. Lord Jesus as we humble ourselves before you today we look up. We praise you.

[00:30:27] God we thank you for your love and your mercy and I would pray even now as I was as I've been praying for this moment right now for this sermon. Lord God in the same way that you stirred my heart. And you called my name and you convicted me of your presence in your power and your truth and your love and your forgiveness. Jesus if you're stirring on anyone's heart today online over in the Baker Center right here in the sanctuary Lord might we respond.

[00:31:00] By faith and say yes I believe I repent. I need help. I need rescue. Lord I receive the gift of your salvation. I believe you're coming again. I believe the truth of your word.

[00:31:16] I thank you for your gift of mercy. You are my living hope God. I need hope. Need hope I need help. God I don't know what to do but my eyes are on you. Or Jesus we look to you right now. We open our hearts to you. We receive not just of salvation but the gift of your Holy Spirit. Present poured out into our very hearts. Thank you Lord for the hope that we have Jesus and your name.