

Resurrection Hope

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[0 : 0 0] Now, as I said this morning, we were together in the house, in our houses, and indeed in our place of worship. We were considering the resurrection joy that the believer in Christ knows because of the reality of the resurrection of Jesus.

Reality of knowing that resurrection and by faith and seeing the Lord Jesus, seeing him who was raised from the dead, and having seen him with eyes of faith, rejoicing in him, having that joy in your heart as you recall and bring to mind and bring to your heart, and express that gladness in knowing the Lord Jesus, the risen Lord Jesus, as your Savior.

And this morning we were noticing the response of the disciples, the response when they saw Jesus, when they saw him physically. We're told that in John 20, that they were glad.

They were glad to see Jesus. And of course, one of these disciples was Peter, Simon Peter. Peter, remember who on that Thursday night when Jesus had been arrested, the disciples fleeing from Jesus, but Peter, falling from a distance, watching where Jesus had been taken to be put on trial before the high priest.

And on that Thursday evening, that late Thursday evening, the same Peter who wrote this letter, the same Peter denying Jesus three times, the same Peter who just days before had said that he would never deny Jesus.

[1 : 4 2] And now this same Peter, the same Peter who saw Jesus, who saw him physically, the same Peter who, many years after that seeing, would write down this letter.

For this same Peter, the joy in his heart and having seen Jesus, and having been forgiven by Jesus, and having been sent by Jesus, the same Peter is expressing this joy in his heart that he knows his saviour.

And even in his old age, as he's written this letter and writing this letter, there's that joy. You can see it. You can detect it. It's a joy from his heart is springing out of his letter.

It's that joy that's so palpable. You see it even as he begins this letter to the church. There's joy in his heart because of the great mercy of God.

He knows that great mercy. He's known it himself. And he knows that mercy that extends to all, to all who are in Christ. And he expresses this joy because of the hope that believers have in our future resurrection.

[2 : 5 5] And there's joy because of the promised inheritance that each and every believer has given. Each and every saint of God has that joy because of the promised inheritance of eternal joy in heaven, being with our Lord and our saviour eternally.

And so it's all joy because of the resurrection hope that all believers are given. That hope that you have to comfort you and assure you of your great salvation in Christ.

And especially, you know, as we think in that element of resurrection hope, well, in many ways it just moves seamlessly from the resurrection joy that we were thinking of this morning into the whole aspect of resurrection hope that we're going to consider more fully this evening.

And so I pray that you will be encouraged. You who are in Christ, be encouraged with that hope of eternal bliss with Christ. Christ your saviour.

And that, yes, that you see even beyond your present sufferings, your present trials. See beyond them to that undefiled inheritance promised to you, to you who are united to Christ, to you who see your saviour by faith.

[4 : 17] Well, let's turn more particularly to the words that we read there, and particularly in verses three to five of this first chapter of 1 Peter, the resurrection that causes praise.

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. You know, the resurrection is absolutely pivotal. It's utterly foundational to understand and to focus on the believer's salvation.

It's absolutely central. The resurrection is absolutely crucial. Crucial to your giving God the glory for his sending Jesus.

Sending Jesus, his son. Sending Jesus from heaven to earth. For Jesus to live for us. To die for us. To be dead for us.

And to be raised to life for us. Because when we think of all that we read of in Scripture of Jesus, his perfect life of obedience, that can't be detached from his dying on the cross.

[5 : 25] And his dying on the cross can't be detached from his being raised from the dead. He can't detach these things. They are all, as it were, together in pointing us to the great work of salvation that Jesus has won for us.

And yes, we do proclaim Christ crucified. We must. We have to. But at the same time, as we proclaim Christ crucified, we proclaim Christ raised from the dead.

See, the resurrection of Jesus guarantees your resurrection. You're his. And it's his resurrection, as we've been thinking of all through this day.

It's his resurrection that rejoices the heart. It's his resurrection that gives you and gives me that hope of eternal life and, well, life in his presence eternally.

It's an inheritance that's ours because of the blood-bought salvation won for us by the Lord Jesus. Because it's the resurrection of Jesus that confirmed his victory over death.

[6 : 36] The resurrection of Jesus confirmed Jesus' victory over sin and his having paid the penalty for sin. And his victory is your victory.

If you're united to him by faith. Because we have to say that you were raised with Christ on that resurrection morning.

And even as we, you know, dwell with these words, as we take in these words, bring them to your heart, then surely they must cause you to rejoice in Christ and give praise to God.

Because that's what Peter's doing here. Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. It's interesting. The Apostle Paul began two of his letters with exactly the same wording.

The same wording of praise, blessing God. And Peter's doing the same. Because that's where his heart is and that's where the heart of the believer should be. Directed to God, to God the Father.

[7 : 40] Praising God the Father for sending God the Son. Praising God the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. And notice again the wording.

Blessed be. Or we might say praise be. Praised be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. So we're praising God the Father for his sending, his one and only Son.

You see, God's, the Father's identifying himself as Father. Father in relation to his Son. His only Son. His Son who's called Lord here.

The Son who's called Christ here. God sent his Son to be Lord. And there's no coincidence that when God was referred to in the Old Testament as Lord, then we're seeing the same designation to Jesus as we read of Jesus in the New Testament.

In other words, what Peter's telling us here is that we can see that the Lord Jesus truly is divine. Even as God the Father was identified as Lord in his divinity.

[8 : 52] So Jesus has been referred to here as the Lord Jesus Christ. We're seeing and recognizing that Jesus truly is divine. He truly is the divine Son of God.

The one who was sent from heaven to earth. Sent at his Father's bidding. So that Jesus is your Lord and my Lord.

So that he's our Lord. And if he's Lord, then we're to submit to him. We're to call upon him and to recognize his reign in our hearts as Lord.

So that Jesus might truly rule over your life as you submit to him. And if Jesus is Lord, then he's to be worshipped.

You know, think on that evening, the week after Jesus' first appearance to the disciples, when Thomas hadn't been in their presence. And remember that second week when Thomas appeared, so-called doubting Thomas.

[9 : 55] Thomas didn't at first believe that Jesus had risen from the dead. And then when Jesus showed him his nail-pierced hands and his pierced side, and Thomas bowing down in worship and crying out to his Savior, my Lord and my God.

Is that how you're calling upon Jesus this evening, my Lord and my God? We praise him.

We worship him. And we worship, of course, God the Father. God's to be praised for his sending his Son, Jesus. And notice how Peter calls him Jesus.

Jesus. Jesus, that name that means salvation or Savior. Jesus was sent by the Father, sent in love. It was the love of the Father for sinners that was, as it were, behind the Father sending his Son.

And Jesus would come in love, in love for his own. Jesus, the one who would bring salvation through his death and through his resurrection.

[11 : 06] But he's not just the Lord Jesus, as Peter tells us here. He's the Lord Jesus Christ. That New Testament word Christ that goes back to the Old Testament word Messiah.

In other words, the promised deliverer of God's people. So when Peter writes here of her praising God, praising God the Father for sending his Son.

Well, Peter's praising God for that ultimate saving event that guarantees our future, our eternal future. And it's that saving event that's the resurrection of Jesus.

Surely then, in the heart of you, all of you who love the Savior, who love God, who love the Lord Jesus Christ, surely there must be that praise in your heart.

And yes, praise to God the Father for sending the Son, the Savior, the Christ, the Lord. He is the Savior.

[12 : 09] He's the only Savior of mankind. And I may just say this, that a cold heart at Easter time is going to remain a cold heart throughout the year, unless it's worn by the praise of God that surely should come from the heart of everyone who knows the Lord Jesus, everyone who's united to him by faith.

May even this day, this Easter Sunday, this day that we remember the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, may there be warmth in your heart as you praise God the Father for sending God the Son, God the Lord, God the Savior, God the Christ.

You know, we can't forget that the sending of Jesus by the Father was that great event in all of world history. Yes, you see Jesus having died on the cross.

Yes, we know that he was dead in that tomb for three days and raised to life on that third day. But remember that we cannot escape from the, we can't forget the Father, God the Father, and sending God the Son, even now in your heart.

Even now, won't you echo these words that Peter wrote, not quite 2,000 years ago, but certainly wrote from his heart, blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.

[13 : 37] These words be lodged in your heart and an expression of your joy in the Lord as you remember the resurrection of the Lord Jesus. But then secondly, as we think of the resurrection of Jesus, we think of the resurrection that points to God's mercy.

Because Peter tells us here, according to God's great mercy, he's caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead.

Notice these words, according to his great mercy. So that when you think and when you reflect on the resurrection of Jesus, then bring to mind the mercy of God, that mercy that God shows you through the resurrection of Jesus.

It's that mercy that tells of God's great compassion towards undeserving sinners such as me and such as you. Well, let's just think a little more on what Peter's saying here when he tells of God's mercy, in fact, God's great mercy.

Well, Peter himself knew the great mercy of God. He knew, well, he knew the mercy of Jesus. When Jesus called him from that life of fishing in the Sea of Galilee, when Jesus called him to be a disciple.

[15 : 03] And Jesus called Peter in mercy. And in mercy, Jesus taught him. And in mercy, Jesus appointed Peter as one of the close disciples of Jesus.

Jesus shared many of the most intimate moments of his life, of his glory with Peter. Of course, as we said a moment ago, Jesus, in his great mercy, forgave Peter for Peter's great denials of Jesus.

And Peter, in the great mercy of God, Peter would be sent to proclaim the good news of Jesus, be sent to do it by word, the word of mouth, and even as an apostle in his writing, even these two great letters, first and second Peter.

The same Peter had been shown God's mercy, appointed as that apostle, appointed as one through whom God would give his word. Peter knew mercy. Peter knew great mercy and has been born again.

Peter had been shown the compassion of God and been given that new birth, that new birth in Christ. Peter was that new creature. And that new birth, been born again, confirmed in the resurrection of Jesus for Peter and for all who are united to Christ.

[16 : 26] You see, the resurrection of Jesus points you to the great mercy of God. Why? Because Jesus rose from the dead. For you who are in Christ, you who are raised with Christ, raised from death to life.

And it's because of the resurrection of Jesus that encourages you not to fear death. I mean, here the words of another apostle, Paul, are very relevant here.

Listen to the words of Paul in relation to the great mercy of God in resurrection. O death, where is your sting? O grave, where is your victory?

See, you have that victory in Christ because of God's great compassion towards you, towards you who are united to Christ. When he rose from the dead, when he rose to new life, you too were raised with him.

And it's that great mystery, the mystery of being united to Christ and even united in his resurrection. It's that mystery and that truth that assures you of your eternal life in Christ.

[17 : 40] It's all because of the mercy of God, all because of the love of God for you that, well, that enables you who know the Lord Jesus as Savior, yes, to share in his resurrection, to share in all that that means concerning your eternal life.

You see, Paul, Peter rather speaks here of God's great mercy. See, there's nothing miserly, nothing mean in God's compassion towards you.

We might say it's awesome, it's full, it's complete mercy. You see, the resurrection itself is great. It's great because it's brought into the kingdom every single one for whom Jesus died on the cross for.

See, God is a great God and God gives to his own a great salvation and our great Savior. And it's that great salvation that gives you who are his.

It gives you that great hope. Well, as Peter tells us here in the start of his letter, the resurrection that gives hope according to his great mercy, he's caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus from the dead.

[18 : 57] Caused us to be born again to a living hope. Just hold on to these words for a moment. These words are promised. He's caused us to be born again to a living hope.

You see, the linchpin, again, it's the resurrection. Your new birth in Christ, it's the same new birth that Peter knew in Christ.

It's that new birth that's possible because you who are united to Christ, you've been eternally united to the Savior. And it's that unity in Christ that the resurrection confirms.

And if you're united to Christ, you've got that sure hope of eternal life in all its fullness. Yes, you know life in Christ now.

You have that assurance now. You have that hope, that sure hope now. But you know, there's a hope that looks beyond the present life. There's a hope that looks beyond this life to that perfection and glory when you rise to be with the Lord Jesus.

[20 : 09] Yes, when you rise in your soul and that moment comes when God calls you home. And then there's that hope of the reuniting, as it were, the reuniting of body and soul when you rise with the saints on earth when the Lord Jesus returns.

It's that hope that guards you from despair. Even in this present time, so many are going through times of suffering for their faith.

Even many of you suffering for your faith. But you've been given that hope, that hope that strengthens your heart with the sure promise of, well, of God's ultimate deliverance.

Delivering you from that body of death. Yes, to an imperishable body that will never fade. and that hope of your soul, that hope of your soul that will never sin.

A relationship, the hope of that relationship with God that's, well, you're never going to be unfaithful on your part and the glory of heaven and the glory of the new heaven and earth. And that hope of that perfect, the perfection of fellowship with believers one to another.

[21 : 25] and that fellowship that's never going to be broken. See, that's the resurrection hope and that, all that we've been seeing tells of that resurrection hope to all who are in Christ.

And notice, it's a living hope. In other words, it's a hope that's with you now. It's alive. It's not dormant. It's not an empty hope. It's not a shallow hope.

It's a living hope. And it's living because of the living Lord Jesus. So don't lose your hope of your eternal well-being. Maintain that hope.

That hope that shielded so many, yes, who even now still are mourning the loss of a loved one in Christ. And it's that hope that shields your heart even now, even as we continue to live through many dark and difficult days.

And so I ask you, do you have that hope of eternal life in Christ? Well, if not, where is your hope? Because the world can't give you that security of hope that only God can give.

[22 : 36] Because the world is fading. The world is finite. Yes, the world promises so much, but the world can give you nothing of any value, any eternal value.

It's only in Christ Jesus, the Lord Jesus Christ, that you find true hope. Why? Because he rose from the dead. He rose to give you that eternal hope of eternal life.

And it's a sure hope that's never going to fade because it's rooted in the eternal love of the Lord Jesus. And so Peter here, Peter writing, he's full of the Spirit as he's writing these words.

He's full of the joy of the Lord as he's expressing this joy of hope, the hope that every believer has. He's telling of that sure hope of eternal life.

That is the result of the resurrection of Jesus. As he's writing this, he delves even deeper, even deeper into what the hope of the believer entails, what that promise is pointing to.

[23 : 42] It's promising and pointing to an eternal inheritance. As Peter tells us, to an inheritance that's imperishable, undefiled and unfading, kept in heaven for you, who by God's power are being guarded through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.

You know, when you think ordinarily of an inheritance, you think of, well, you think of some item of property, some possession that an heir receives in the death of, well, of an owner or a parent, for example.

You know, something of value that's given to somebody when the owner of that property or possession dies. And that person who inherits, that person has a legal right to receive what's considered theirs by right, well, mainly by right of family connections, blood connections.

But when we come to what Peter's telling us here of an inheritance, it's not so much a legal right that a person receives on the death of another, but it's a right of possession a person receives when the owner is still alive and the person who's giving that inheritance is still alive.

You have that promise of an inheritance you've got that promise now because Jesus is alive. He's alive as we were saying this morning, Christ is risen.

[25 : 16] He's alive. He's been raised to life. Guarantees that eternal inheritance. It's yours now. It's your possession now, that inheritance that God promises you.

You know, the Israelites, we've been thinking a lot in the last few months in the Exodus from Egypt, the promised Exodus from Egypt. The Israelites were promised an inheritance, the land of promise, the promised land.

And even in that promise, the land was still to be possessed. But in that promise, the land was, well, it was as good as theirs. It was already theirs. Now, think of the hope that's yours because of the resurrection of Jesus.

You're promised an inheritance that's already yours. Yours if you're united to Christ. I mean, you who are his, your name's already written on that great roll call of all who are already in the kingdom of God.

Yes, you still have to access and enter your heavenly possession. But we can say this, it's already yours. That inheritance is already yours. And you have that great promise of that inheritance that's imperishable, undefiled, and unfading.

[26 : 41] In other words, well, think of your earthly inheritances, property, possessions. They'll fade. They'll disappear. They're not permanent.

But your heavenly inheritance is eternally safe. As Peter tells us here, it's undefiled. In other words, it's pure. There's nothing of any sinful contamination in that inheritance.

Nothing's going to mar your inheritance. Peter tells us it's unfading. It's forever. And in our world of so much uncertainty, so much that's causing destruction, whether physical destruction or emotional destruction, well, even in this world that God has placed us in, you still have that great assurance of God's protection over you, God's sustaining you, God's strengthening your faith, strengthen your faith in that sure hope of that glorious inheritance, an inheritance that the world knows nothing of, but you know of, because if you are in Christ, you're given to know the promise of that inheritance.

And so may that promise be of comfort even to you this evening, that promise that tells of your sure salvation, a salvation that can never be taken away from you.

As Peter tells us here, that salvation that's going to be fully revealed, as he says, at the last time, in other words, when Jesus returns. Jesus returns in all his glorious church.

[28 : 22] And those who are united to him, who have been united, who are united to him, and as God's word tells us, that all who are united to Christ will rise, rise from our graves, rise to be with him forever, and to rise to share in that great inheritance.

But again, as God's word tells us, those who are not united to Christ, doomed to everlasting destruction. Again, I ask you these words, these solemn words, will your salvation be revealed at the end of the world?

Will you be among those who rise to be with Christ forever? Or will you be lost eternally because you didn't receive Jesus as your savior?

Because in life, you didn't want anything to do with the Lord Jesus Christ. You see, that last day, the day that Jesus returns, that day will reveal, yes, will reveal salvation and damnation.

Where will you be on that last day? Well, as this Easter Sunday draws, well, draws towards a close. As again, we've turned our hearts and minds to this, well, this great truth of the empty grave that points to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus.

[29 : 49] Us today, I pray, we've praised God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. I pray that even the thoughts that we've had this day on resurrection joy and resurrection hope, that you've been filled with that joy and that hope.

hope. And yes, we might say that even this joy that we have in our hearts in many ways is a joy in part now and a remembering in part.

But know this, that you will have abundant joy in the glory of heaven. Your hope will have been realized even because of the risen Lord Jesus.

And especially, yes, especially as we're still in these strange and difficult times, times that have so spoken to us of the fragility of life, the uncertainty of life, even these restrictions that we're still living in and through.

Well, I pray that the joy of this time of year, the joy of Easter and the hope of Easter, that that joy and that hope will have filled your hearts with fresh zeal for the Lord.

[30 : 59] And you'll have that fresh determination to serve Him. And to give your life to the one who gave His life for you and who rose to that risen life to guarantee your salvation.

He is the Lord Jesus Christ. He is your Savior. You will put your trust in Him. So seek to live a life that, yes, points others to the resurrection joy, the resurrection hope that's in your heart now.

and tell them and show them that that joy and that hope are only found, true joy, true hope, only found in the one Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ.

So may God bless to us His word this evening. Amen. And let us pray. our Heavenly Father, as we draw towards the close of another Lord's Day, even this day when we've been very much brought to mind the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, may the joy that that resurrection brings and the hope that the resurrection brings, may that joy and that hope be in the hearts of your people this evening.

and may we show it, may we delight to show that joy and delight to tell others of the hope that is within us, even the hope of salvation in and through the Lord Jesus.

[32 : 33] So our God, we pray your blessing upon this service, upon this time of worship and fellowship. Lord, continue to bless us even through the remainder of this day. And may you have the glory in all things.

We pray these things in Jesus' name. Amen. Amen.