

# Peter And The Gospel #1

**Introduction.** The first ten verses of Peter's first epistle are as majestic as they are comprehensive in thought. As Peter penned this epistle, the dark clouds of the first great outbreak of official persecution, instigated by the insane Emperor Nero, were gathering on the horizon.

Peter follows his introduction with a sweeping hymn of praise regarding the works of redemption. Peter's doxology has components that help all Christians praise God more intelligently. To help the church grasp its eternal inheritance, and bless and worship God more fully, Peter sets forth several relevant features of our redemption.

## ***I. Foreordination (v. 2)***

- A. God's people were corporately "chosen" or "predestined" because God "foreknew" them. The Father is regarded, in the Bible, as the author of the plan of salvation, and as having chosen His people to life, and given them to His Son to redeem and save (John 6:37, 65; 17:2, 6, 11).
- B. Just like Jesus was delivered up by the determinate counsel and divine foreknowledge (Acts 2:22-23), the plan to redeem man existed from before the foundation of the world (Romans 8:29-30; Ephesians 1:4; 3:10).

## ***II. Sanctification (v. 2)***

- A. This relates to separation, consecration, and holiness (1 Thessalonians 4:1-8; 1 Peter 2:9-10). Just as the Old Testament priests were consecrated (Exodus 28:40-41), the Corinthians were sanctified by the Spirit (1 Corinthians 6:9-11) and baptized into one Spirit (1 Corinthians 12:13).
- B. The sanctification of the Spirit is accomplished by the scriptures (John 16:13; 17:17; 2 Thessalonians 2:13-14). The word points us toward obedience to the sprinkled blood of Jesus Christ (Hebrews 9:19-22; 12:24).

## ***III. Regeneration (v. 3)***

- A. An Ethiopian cannot change his skin and a leopard cannot change his spots (Jeremiah 13:23), and the only way a sinner can make it to Heaven is to experience God's means of spiritual transformation, the new birth (Titus 3:5; James 1:18).
- B. Peter goes on to declare that regeneration results in Christians receiving a living hope. The unbelieving world knows only dying hope (Job 8:13; Proverbs 10:28), but Christians have a living, undying hope (Psalm 33:18; 39:7; Romans 5:5; Titus 2:13; Hebrews 6:19) that will come to a complete, final, glorious fulfillment (Romans 5:2; Colossians 1:27; 2 Peter 3:13).
- C. The means of Christians appropriating the living hope is spiritual birth, and the power for that appropriation was demonstrated by the resurrection of Jesus (John 11:25-26; 14:19; 1 Corinthians 15:20-28, 47-49, 54-57).

#### **IV. Expectation (v. 4)**

- A. "Inheritance" is used multiple times in the Old Testament to speak of the portions of Canaan allotted by God to each tribe in Israel except Levi (Numbers 18:20-24; Joshua 13:32-33).
- B. Peter told his readers that just as Israel received an earthly inheritance, the land of Canaan, so the church receives a spiritual inheritance in Heaven (Acts 20:32; 26:18; Ephesians 1:11, 18; Colossians 1:18; 3:24; Hebrews 9:15).
- C. This inheritance is not subject to destruction, it is not stained or polluted, and it will never be taken away or lose its magnificence. Peter reiterated the unfading nature of the church's inheritance in 1 Peter 5:4.

#### **V. Preservation (v. 5)**

- A. Having pledged that the Christian's spiritual inheritance was permanent in nature, Peter adds to his readers' security by declaring that the Christian's inheritance is reserved in Heaven. Heaven is the securest place in the universe.
- B. "Kept" is a military term indicating the guarding or watching done by soldiers. God's power is His sovereign omnipotence that continuously protects His elect. If God protected David in his flight from Saul, and if He protected Paul from the Jews, He will preserve us to an eternal home. If God is for Christians, no one can successfully oppose them (Romans 8:31-39; Jude 24-25). All the details of this promise are to provide the Christian with an undying hope of Heaven, and therefore give them joy and endurance (2 Timothy 1:8-9; Titus 1:2).

**Conclusion.** Christians possess some of the benefits of salvation in this life, but the great fulness of redemption is yet to come. God has promised unfathomable glories in the eternal perfection of Heaven that will one day be the conscious experience of every Christian. He is the source of this wonderful gift; it came because of His mercy and by the gracious means of the new birth, and it remains perfect and eternally secure, a reality on which all Christians can fix their hopes.