

TAKE UP YOUR CROSS FOLLOW JESUS



Old Testament Reading – Isaiah 64:1-12

New Testament Reading – Ephesians 1:15-22

How Should We Then Live “The Assurance of Our Salvation” # 2 1 Peter 1:3-5

In his epistles, the Apostle Peter revealed the essence of his life-calling was to challenge believers to maintain hope while enduring persecution, for therein lies the assurance of our eternal salvation.

- When we suffer persecution for our faith in Christ, we are, in effect, participating in the sufferings of Christ, who, for the joy set before Him, endured the cross.
- Rather than whine about our suffering, or look for some way to avoid it, or even pray for God to stop it, the Apostle Peter said we should rejoice in our suffering, for God has given us the opportunity to prove Himself strong in our lives.

- The Apostle Paul said that if we submit to persecution, we will learn things about Jesus Christ that can't be learned any other way. We will develop a deeper relationship with Jesus Christ than we ever thought possible.

Timeless Truths From 1 Peter 1:3-5

- Things on earth may be falling apart, but things in heaven are always secure.
- The people of the world may reject us, but our loving Father has accepted us.
- Our stand for Christ may cost us our earthly inheritance, but we can never lose our heavenly inheritance.
- Therefore, when persecution comes, let's not focus on what is happening around us but rather the God who is above us and the God who dwells within us, for He is God the Father of our Lord, Jesus Christ.

1. Our Salvation was given to us through the grace and mercy of God the Father. (Vs. 3)

- We are "in Christ" (Christians) today because God the Father chose us in Christ, even before the foundation of the world.
- The same God of the Old Testament, who chose Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob out of His grace, His goodness, and in His sovereignty, and love, also chose us to receive such a great a salvation.
- Therefore, we should live our lives in praise to the One who saved us from eternal hell and assured us of our eternal home in heaven.

2. Our Salvation was obtained through the resurrection of Jesus Christ. (Vs. 3)

- If Christ was not raised from the dead, we are still dead in our trespasses and sins, and Christianity is nothing but another manufactured religion.
- At least a dozen times, the writers of the New Testament declared God raised Jesus from the grave.
- To deny Jesus' physical resurrection is to deny the essential element of God's plan for our redemption and to render this life meaningless.

3. Our Salvation includes an inheritance in heaven that is incorruptible, undefiled, and will never fade away. (Vs 4)

- Our inheritance is not a physical treasure that can be stolen or lose its value over time.
- Our inheritance is our eternal oneness with God. Therefore, it is reserved for those who are born again by the Holy Spirit.

4. Our Salvation includes God's power to keep us faithful to our calling, even to the end. (Vs. 5)

- To be promised a heavenly inheritance ***if we lived a perfectly sinless life*** is an unrealistic expectation, and God the Father made no such conditional promise to us.
 - The same God who promised us our heavenly inheritance also pledged to keep us from stumbling so we can stand before His presence on that day, rejoicing and receive our rewards.
 - Religion says our faith in our faith will keep us faithful – *all we need to do is to follow their religious rules.*
 - Christianity says our faith should be in God's ability to keep us faithful, for it is by His power that we are being kept in the grip of His grace.
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“To live a holy life is to live a life in conformity to the moral precepts of the Bible and in contrast to the sinful ways of the world. By putting off of our old self, and putting on the new self, we can become like God in righteousness and holiness.”

The Pursuit of Holiness – Jerry Bridges

- In Romans 6-8, the Apostle Paul said, when the Holy Spirit indwelt us, the power of sin over us was broken. We have the power to resist sin.
- In Ephesians 4:22-24, the Apostle Paul said, when the Holy Spirit indwelt us, believers were given the power to put off their former way of life and put on the new way of life.
- That does not mean we will never sin again, for we are still but sinners, saved by grace. However, it does mean, born-again believers will not continue to live in sin.

“What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound? Certainly not! How shall we who died to sin live any longer in it?”

Romans 6:1-2

- Christians must make every effort to be holy, for therein lies our witness to others.

5. Our Salvation will be revealed in the last time. (Vs. 5)

- God is keeping our inheritance for us, but He is also keeping us for our inheritance.
- The day we were saved, the blood of Christ paid for our sins – *we were justified before God.*
- When Christ indwelt us by the power of the Holy Spirit, we were given power over sin – *we were and are being sanctified unto God.*
- On the day we are raptured from this world or raised from our graves, we will be delivered from the presence of sin – *we will be glorified by God.*

The joy of the Lord we enjoy today is only a foretaste of what will be ours for all eternity. ***“In thy presence is the fullness of joy.”*** Psalm 16:11

PETER'S PROGRESSIVE SPIRITUAL DEVELOPMENT



• Peter the Believer –Matthew 4:18-20 –

- Peter was the first man to forsake all and to follow Jesus.

• Peter the Confessor – Matthew 16:16-18 –

- Peter may have made the first confession of faith in Jesus as the Messiah.

- **Peter the Carnal – Matthew 16:16-18 –**

- Peter followed Jesus for earthly reasons rather than for the kingdom of God.

- **Peter the denier – Matthew 26:69-75 –**

- Peter denied the Lord three times and ran away from the crowd, crying.

- **Peter the restored – John 21:1-19 –**

- Although Peter had forsaken Christ, Christ had not forsaken Him, and God used Peter to get the gospel to the ends of the world.