



## 1 Peter: God of Resurrection

**Memory Verse:** 1 Peter 1:3-5 “Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! In his great mercy he has given us new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, and into an inheritance that can never perish, spoil or fade. This inheritance is kept in heaven for you, who through faith are shielded by God’s power until the coming of the salvation that is ready to be revealed in the last time.”

### Background

First Peter is the 60th book of the Bible and the 21st book in the New Testament. Peter, one of the original twelve disciples and “an apostle of Jesus Christ,” was the author of this letter. Peter wrote to a group of Christians (likely both Jews and Gentiles), “exiles/strangers” who were “scattered throughout” the northern areas of Asia Minor (1:1). First Peter was written between 64-67 AD, during the Roman emperor Nero’s great persecution of Christians. This is same persecution that led to Paul’s death, and according to tradition, Peter’s as well. At the time of this letter, Peter had not yet been arrested, but sent his greetings from “the church that is at Babylon” (5:13). While it is possible that Peter was actually writing from Babylon, he most likely used the term as a metaphor for Rome. Rome, like the ancient Mesopotamian city of Babylon, had given itself over to the worship of idols and false gods and so was deserving of that moniker. Furthermore, tradition has Peter spending his final years serving the church in Rome which would fit the time of this letter. Peter wrote this letter to encourage Christians who were suffering and being persecuted, reminding them of Christ’s sufferings and the hope that is found in God.

### The Short Story

In the midst of suffering and persecution, hope is found in the person and work of Jesus Christ.

### What’s the Big Idea?

Written during a time of intense persecution for Christians, 1 Peter focuses on the issues of pain, suffering, persecution, and a believer’s reason for hope through it all. Peter points out that suffering, even unjust suffering, is purposeful (2:19-20; 3:14; 4:14). “...These [trials] have come so that the proven genuineness of your faith—of greater worth than gold, which perishes even though refined by fire—may result in praise, glory and honor when Jesus Christ is revealed.” (1:6-7). Suffering is to be expected and not to be feared. “Dear friends, do not be surprised at the fiery ordeal that has come on you to test you, as though something strange were happening to you.” (4:12). “But even if you should suffer for what is right, you are blessed. ‘Do not fear their threats; do not be frightened.’ ” (3:14). Suffering is in God’s will (4:19), is to be borne patiently (2:23; 3:9), and rejoiced in. “But rejoice inasmuch as you participate in the sufferings of Christ, so that you may be overjoyed when his glory is revealed.” (4:13). Throughout, Peter continuously refers to the sufferings of Christ as the believer’s example and hope to endure persecution, living holy lives even in a hostile world. “To this you were called, because Christ suffered for you, leaving you an example, that you should follow in his steps.” (2:21).

### So What? Why is this book so important? What was God’s purpose for the book?

Jesus Christ suffered and died to redeem His people with His precious blood from a sinful, empty life (1:18-19; 2:24). However, He did not stay dead! Jesus Christ is alive! His resurrection and sure return gives believers a “new birth” into a “living hope” and “an inheritance that can never perish, spoil or fade” (1:3-4). Even though believers are “exiles” who suffer for a little while here on earth, we, too, have the promise of being resurrected from the dead, bearing the image of our glorious Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. “But our citizenship is in heaven. And we eagerly await a Savior from there, the Lord Jesus Christ, who, by the power that enables him to bring everything under his control, will transform our lowly bodies so that they will be like his glorious body.” (Philippians 3:20-21). “...this is the true grace of God. Stand fast in it.” (5:12).

*\*Material taken from various sources.*

## Teaching Text

**1 Peter 1:3-5** “Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! In his great mercy he has given us new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, and into an inheritance that can never perish, spoil or fade. This inheritance is kept in heaven for you, who through faith are shielded by God’s power until the coming of the salvation that is ready to be revealed in the last time.”

## Sermon-Based Discussion Questions

- Why is it important to start with praise when reflecting on the benefits of being a Christian?
- How would you define “great mercy” and “new birth” to someone who is not a Christian?
- What did Peter mean when he used the term “living hope”? What does hope do for the believer?
- What are the implications of the Resurrection for those who believe in it according to Rom 8:10-11?
- In verses 4 & 5, Peter describes the security of our salvation. How does this make you feel?

## Practical Application

- Where do you need to give more praise & thanksgiving to God in your life? Pick one thing each day.
- Why is mercy so important? How are we to respond to God’s mercy? How do we give it away?
- How should we apply the Resurrection to our lives? Practically speaking: What does that look like?
- Where do you need more hope in your life? Have you applied Romans 10:9-10 to your life?
- How does it make you feel to know you’re kept and shielded by the power of God?

## Hitting the Highpoints

- 1:13-16 “But just as he who called you is holy, so be holy in all you do...”
- 4:12-13 “...do not be surprised at the fiery ordeal that has come on you to test you ...”
- 4:19 “... should commit themselves to their faithful Creator and continue to do good..”
- 5:8 “Be alert and of sober mind. Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour .”
- 5:10-11 “And the God of all grace, who called you to his eternal glory in Christ, after you have suffered a little while, will himself restore you and make you strong, firm and steadfast....”

## Bonus Features

“And, truly, this is a blessing, beyond all comparison or imagination, that we have been begotten again by the Divine Father unto a “living” hope, for that is a better rendering than “lively.” Our first birth brought us into sin and sorrow, but our second birth brings us into purity and joy. We were born to die; now are we born never to die, “begotten again” unto a life that shall remain in us for evermore, a life which shall even penetrate these mortal bodies, and make them immortal, “by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead.” Joy, my brethren, in the glorious inheritance which is prepared for you, unstained, uncorrupted, perfectly pure, and therefore to last for ever, because the elements which produce decay are not in it. It is without sin, and therefore it shall be without end. What a mercy it is to be “kept by the power of God”! See, heaven is kept for us, and we are kept for heaven; heaven is prepared for us, and we are prepared for heaven. There is a double action of God’s grace thus working in us, and working for us, unto bliss eternal.” *Spurgeon’s Verse Expositions of the Bible*

## Personal Takeaways and Notes