

The Power of Hope

Rev. Tom Parrish

I Peter 1:3-9

3 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! According to his great mercy, he has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, 4 to an inheritance that is imperishable, undefiled, and unfading, kept in heaven for you, 5 who by God's power are being guarded through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.

6 In this you rejoice, though now for a little while, if necessary, you have been grieved by various trials, 7 so that the tested genuineness of your faith—more precious than gold that perishes though it is tested by fire—may be found to result in praise and glory and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ.

8 Though you have not seen him, you love him. Though you do not now see him, you believe in him and rejoice with joy that is inexpressible and filled with glory, 9 obtaining the outcome of your faith, the salvation of your souls.

Despair: the loss of confidence that things will get better or change for the better. A life without hope.

The Hope we have to offer to the world.

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This is finally a picture of the church, our mission to a hopeless world.

As believers in Jesus Christ we will suffer just like others.

As believes life will not always be fair.

As believes we will be used and abused.

Instead of bitterness and anger we have the opportunity to take Jesus by the hand and walk with him through the pain just as the mother walked her child into the holocaust.

Why? Because we have HOPE that this life and these circumstances are not the final word.

3 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! According to his great mercy, he has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead,

- Our hope is living: that living hope is a person-Jesus!!!

- That hope is ours through the bodily resurrection of Jesus.

Peter now identifies our ultimate destination. *4 to an inheritance that is imperishable, undefiled, and unfading, kept in heaven for you, 5 who by God's power are being guarded through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.*

- Imperishable-no refrigeration needed!!! Shelf life is incredible.

- Undefiled: not watered down. It will be everything we expect and even more.

- Unfading: never lose its appeal, it's draw, its strength.

- Kept in heaven for you: It's already there!!!!

Vs. 5 Guarded by God's power. No better watchman.

All of this is ours by faith (trust) in Jesus for his ultimate unveiling at the end of times as King of Kings and Lord of Lord.

Revelation 21:4 *He will wipe away every tear from their eyes, and death shall be no more, neither shall there be mourning, nor crying, nor pain anymore, for the former things have passed away."*

- How many tears? All of them! Every tear you have shed will be replaced by joy.

- Death shall be no more! The last enemy conquered-eternal is our reality.

- No mourning. Why? There is No death, no sin, no pain, no sorrow evermore!

- No crying: nothing to cry about.

- No pain. Total health
- Why? The former things have passed away (they're dead and gone) Overwith FOREVER.

Peter reminds us in vs 6 *In this you rejoice, though now for a little while, if necessary, you have been grieved by various trials,*

What does suffering do for us who believe? 7 *so that the tested genuineness of your faith—more precious than gold that perishes though it is tested by fire—may be found to result in praise and glory and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ.*

- Suffering removes our lust for this world and moves heart toward eternity.
- Suffering draws us closer to Jesus just like metal is drawn to a magnet.

All of this is true since the hope that we have is an eternal DESTINATION because we know him and love him. 8 *Though you have not seen him, you love him. Though you do not now see him, you believe in him and rejoice with joy that is inexpressible and filled with glory, 9 obtaining the outcome of your faith, the salvation of your souls.*

Vs. 8 is true for 99.9% of all Christians who have ever lived.

Surprisingly the Bible defines eternity not on the bases of the place we are going to: heaven, but describes it in terms of the relationship:

John 17:3 “Now this is eternal life, that they KNOW you the one true God and Jesus Christ whom you have sent.”

- When we know and love Jesus eternal life has already begun.
- We have already passed from death to life.
- We are already heaven bound.
- We are already his body in the world.

This is the HOPE we have to offer the world.

When Jesus his final words to his disciples he said 8 *But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth.” Acts 1:8*

- Hope Lutheran Churches Jerusalem is: Minneapolis.
- Hope Lutheran Churches Judea is America.
- Hope Lutheran Churches Samaria is the rest of the world.

Hope's Plan:

Minneapolis: One mile radius outreach. Supporting local ministries. Radio and TV.

America: Mission trips in the USA such as Booneville. Supporting outreach work through Christian organizations. Standing with God's Word regarding sexuality, life and purpose.

The World: AFLC world mission, Hanny & Natalie in Africa, Ruth Singh in Guyana. And planning to raise up forty missionaries over the next ten years and sending them out to the four corners of the world.

Today we must also begin to plan your mission in these three arenas. Jesus has called each of you individually to this task. I invite you to begin praying about your call to take the Gospel to Minneapolis, America and the World.