Celebrating Salvation in a World of Suffering

(1 Peter 1:1-2:10)

The greatest antidote to the pain of suffering in this world is the joy inexpressible that comes from grasping the wonder of our salvation.  In this session, we will consider the opening of the epistle as the great apostle showcases the wonder of the gospel and the privilege of the believer to be built into the building of God’s people.  Together we will reflect personally on the blessing of being His at a time like this.

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An introduction to the theological themes of the letter . . .

“saving grace as a movement from present suffering

to future glory in the nonbelieving world and

as a fellowship of love in the believing community.” (Kendall, 1986)

1. **Outline of This Section of 1 Peter**
   1. Opening Celebration: Christ’s Life and Christian Experience, 1:3-12
      1. Future: The living hope of the believer, 1:3-5
      2. Present: The suffering (and joy!) of the believer, 1:6-9
      3. Past: Prophets & angels anticipated the suffering & glory of Jesus, 1:10-12
   2. Be what you are, 1:13-2:3
      1. Called to be the children of the Father
         1. Holy, 1:13-16
         2. Honouring God, 1:17-21
      2. Christian love leads to moral transformation
         1. Living out love to each other, 1:22-25
         2. Living out God’s goodness, 2:1-3
   3. Be who you are as God’s people, 2:4-12
      1. A spiritual house and a holy priesthood, 2:4-8
      2. Now you are the people of God, 2:9-10
      3. (So live differently in this world, 2:11-12 – note, this really fits at the start of the next section)
2. **Lessons for Preaching During Suffering**
   1. Our need for anchoring in the progress of God’s time (1:3-12)
   2. Our need for anchoring in our God-given identity (1:13-2:12)
   3. Our lives as interwoven with Christ’s life
      1. A living stone rejected by men but in the sight of God chosen and precious (2:4)
      2. In respect to the world: From present suffering to future glory
      3. In respect to fellowship: A community of love

**9**But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for his own possession, that you may proclaim the excellencies of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light. **10**Once you were not a people, but now you are God’s people; once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy.

**Born Again to a Living Hope**

**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.

**10**Concerning this salvation, the prophets who prophesied about the grace that was to be yours searched and inquired carefully, **11**inquiring what person or time the Spirit of Christ in them was indicating when he predicted the sufferings of Christ and the subsequent glories. **12**It was revealed to them that they were serving not themselves but you, in the things that have now been announced to you through those who preached the good news to you by the Holy Spirit sent from heaven, things into which angels long to look.

**13**Therefore, preparing your minds for action, and being sober-minded, set your hope fully on the grace that will be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ. **14**As obedient children, do not be conformed to the passions of your former ignorance, **15**but as he who called you is holy, you also be holy in all your conduct, **16**since it is written, “You shall be holy, for I am holy.” **17**And if you call on him as Father who judges impartially according to each one’s deeds, conduct yourselves with fear throughout the time of your exile, **18**knowing that you were ransomed from the futile ways inherited from your forefathers, not with perishable things such as silver or gold, **19**but with the precious blood of Christ, like that of a lamb without blemish or spot. **20**He was foreknown before the foundation of the world but was made manifest in the last times for the sake of you **21**who through him are believers in God, who raised him from the dead and gave him glory, so that your faith and hope are in God.

**22**Having purified your souls by your obedience to the truth for a sincere brotherly love, love one another earnestly from a pure heart, **23**since you have been born again, not of perishable seed but of imperishable, through the living and abiding word of God; **24**for

“All flesh is like grass

and all its glory like the flower of grass.

The grass withers,

and the flower falls,

**25** but the word of the Lord remains forever.”

And this word is the good news that was preached to you.

**A Living Stone and a Holy People**

**2**So put away all malice and all deceit and hypocrisy and envy and all slander. **2**Like newborn infants, long for the pure spiritual milk, that by it you may grow up into salvation— **3**if indeed you have tasted that the Lord is good.

**4**As you come to him, a living stone rejected by men but in the sight of God chosen and precious, **5**you yourselves like living stones are being built up as a spiritual house, to be a holy priesthood, to offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ. **6**For it stands in Scripture:

“Behold, I am laying in Zion a stone,

a cornerstone chosen and precious,

and whoever believes in him will not be put to shame.”

**7**So the honor is for you who believe, but for those who do not believe,

“The stone that the builders rejected

has become the cornerstone,”

**8**and

“A stone of stumbling,

and a rock of offense.”

They stumble because they disobey the word, as they were destined to do.

**9**But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for his own possession, that you may proclaim the excellencies of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light. **10**Once you were not a people, but now you are God’s people; once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy.

**11**Beloved, I urge you as sojourners and exiles to abstain from the passions of the flesh, which wage war against your soul. **12**Keep your conduct among the Gentiles honorable, so that when they speak against you as evildoers, they may see your good deeds and glorify God on the day of visitation.