

Benefits of the New Birth

Today's message is about hope.

It's what everyone needs when times are rough.

Hope is believing that things will change, so we should never give up.

We look at hope as wishing for something to come true.

"I hope I win the lottery."

"I hope my boy shapes up someday."

"I hope things work out for me in my job."

"I hope I make it to the next paycheck."

But this kind of wishful thinking is different by far from a living hope.

Biblical hope is believing that it will come true.

The hope we have as Christians is grounded in the reality of Christ and His resurrection! Because He rose from the dead, we too, will be raised from the grave. We will have new bodies – glorified ones just like His. In fact, it gives us hope even at the graveside of a loved-one. We have a hope of heaven.

There was no other good enough
To pay the price of sin
He only could unlock the gate of heaven
And let us in.

The Greek word translated "**hope**" in the New Testament is '*elpizo*' which means "*to anticipate with confident expectation.*" It is also translated "*trust*" in several NT verses. Our hope for heaven is based on Christ alone

Upon a life I did not live,
Upon a death I did not die,
Another's life, another's death,
I stake my whole eternity.

There are two things we need to know to have a right relationship with God:
First, we are great sinners;
Second, that Christ is a great Savior.

Because the sinless Savior died,
 My sinful soul is counted free.
 For God the just is satisfied
 To look on Him and pardon me.

³Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,
 who according to His great mercy has caused us to be **born again**
to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead,
⁴to *obtain* an **inheritance** which is **imperishable** and **undefiled**
 and will **not fade away, reserved** in heaven for you,
⁵who are **protected** by the power of God through faith for a **salvation** ready
 to be revealed in **the last time.**

1 Peter 1:3-5

In this text Peter makes three confident affirmations about our salvation:

Our salvation [Sermon 1] - Hope

...gives us hope beyond the grave for ourselves and our loved ones.

Our salvation [Sermon 2] – Future Inheritance

...offers us a great promise of an indestructible inheritance.

Our salvation [Sermon 3] – Security for Believers

...gives us the confidence of God’s protection until we get to heaven.

Purpose in Persecution – Perfecting our Faith [Sermon 4]

... Why believers smile through suffering?

Last time we saw that Peter was written to scattered readers in Asia Minor.
 They were suffering the beginnings of Roman persecution for their faith;
 Peter writes to encourage these believers in their faith, with the real
 possibility of even greater persecution coming their way.

Peter’s letter to the suffering saints begins with the Benefits the New Birth.

born again
to a living hope

I. A Living Hope

We have A Living Hope because of the New Birth.

(The Living Translation of verse 3)

“³All praise to God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. It is by his great mercy that we have been born again, because God raised Jesus Christ from the dead. Now we live with great expectation...”

The ultimate destination on this long, difficult journey is eternity in heaven.

We have a living hope –Our living hope based on a living Christ.

Living in us; He becomes our life.

1. Hope for the Hopeless.

We are hopeless without Christ. Christ becomes our only hope.

Even as Jesus was dead and buried, so all hopes were buried – dead and gone.

When He rose from the dead on the third day all hopes were restored.

This is the picture of our situation:

The sinful state of mankind is spiritual death - separation from God.

The new birth is the starting point of new life - from death to life.

Salvation is the work of God that makes believers alive in Christ.

Paul writes to the Ephesians,

“And you were dead in your trespasses and sins... But God being rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, even when we were dead in our transgressions, made us alive together with Christ (for by grace you have been saved), and raised us up with Him, and seated us with Him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus.” (Eph. 2:1,4-6).

From death to life, salvation makes those who are dead in sin, alive in Christ.

Ravi Zacharias emphasizes this truth,

“Jesus didn’t come into the world to make bad people good,
but to make dead people live.”

Even death cannot quench the flames of hope for all who are in Christ.

Paul writes in a message of comfort:

“But we do not want you to be uninformed, brethren,
 about **those who are asleep**,
 so that you will not grieve as do the rest who have no hope.
For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again,
 even so God will bring with Him **those who have fallen asleep** in Jesus.
 For this we say to you by the word of the Lord,
 that we who are alive and remain until **the coming of the Lord**,
 will not precede those **who have fallen asleep**.
 For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout,
 with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet of God,
 and **the dead in Christ will rise first**. Then we who are alive and
 remain will be **caught up together with them** in the clouds
to meet the Lord in the air,
 and so we shall always be **with the Lord**.
 Therefore comfort one another with these words.” (1 Thess. 4:13-18)

One theologian wrote,

“Their hope, in other words, is the hope of resurrection, triumph over death; hence,
 whatever happens to them in this world is trivial compared to the blessing of
 the future resurrection.”¹

The point of greatest hopelessness is when death occurs.
 Peter writes about God’s great mercy that makes us alive...

...that regenerates us to a living hope... lit.

The starting point of salvation.

One night Jesus spoke with a Pharisee named Nicodemus.
 Nicodemus had a reputation as the greatest teacher in Israel. He came to Jesus by
 night to have a theological discussion with the new teacher in town.

Jesus’ first words are,

¹ Schreiner, T. R. (2003). [1, 2 Peter, Jude](#) (Vol. 37, p. 62). Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers.

“Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born again he cannot see the kingdom of God...Do not be amazed that I said to you, you must be born again.” (John 3:3, 8).

We can have degrees in theology and perfect attendance in church all our lives. We may know all about the Bible, but if we don't know the Author behind it, we will have missed it. **We must personally know Christ.**

John writes,

“And the testimony is this, that God has given us eternal life, and this life is in His Son. He who has the Son has the life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have the life. These things I have written to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, so that you may know that you have eternal life.” (1 John 5:11-13).

We are born again when Christ lives within us.

2. Mercy for the Undeserving.

...according to His great mercy

Salvation is by God's mercy.

Salvation is independent on our efforts, achievements, or good works, but is wholly dependent on God's mercy.

Mercy – eleos – great mercy... abundant mercy

Wuest translates:

Not “...According to the measure of His abundant mercy”
but “impelled by His abundant mercy”

He says,

“It was the compelling constraint in the merciful heart of God that made inevitable the atonement for sinners.”

God is so full of mercy that He was moved to save us.

Matthew Henry says,

Regeneration produces a lively hope of eternal life. Every unconverted person is a hopeless creature; whatever he pretends to of that kind is all confidence and presumption. The right Christian hope is what a man is begotten again unto by the Spirit of God; it is not from nature, but free grace. Those who are begotten to a new and spiritual life are begotten to a new and spiritual hope²

Here, mercy and grace come together

Since no one could ever merit salvation, or ever be deserving, then salvation is for the undeserving, who receive it by grace (unmerited favor) through faith.

Through Christ we receive grace and abundant mercy.

In a letter to Titus Paul writes,

“But when the kindness of God our Savior and His love for mankind appeared, He saved us not on the basis of deeds which we have done in righteousness, but **according to His mercy**, by the washing of regeneration and renewing by the Holy spirit, whom He poured out upon us richly through Jesus Christ our Savior, so that being justified by His grace we would be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life” (Titus 3:5-7).

“...for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, being justified as a gift by His grace through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus...” (Rom. 3:2-24).

Salvation is moving from living death to deathless life.

Jack Odell

- Salvation is a gift of Mercy from our heavenly Father.
- We are justified by His Grace in hope of eternal life.
- Our merciful God has given us merciful life.

Chief of sinners though I be,
 Jesus shed His blood for me;
 Died that I might live on high,
 Lives that I may never die.

William McComb

² Henry, M. (1994). [*Matthew Henry's commentary on the whole Bible: complete and unabridged in one volume*](#) (p. 2422). Peabody: Hendrickson.