

A Permanent Inheritance

We have been looking at Peter's first epistle where he speaks about the believer's heavenly inheritance.

An inheritance is when someone dies and leaves their wealth to an heir. Sometimes things don't go as expected. I heard about a man who had a distant uncle pass away and leave him some unexpected treasures from his estate. A package containing a violin and a painting, which he immediately took to an appraiser. After a short time, the appraiser called him.

"I've finished my analysis, and I've got some good news. There's no doubt at all that what you have is a genuine Van Gogh and a genuine Stradivarius."

The man was ecstatic, "I can sell these for millions!"

Then the appraiser corrected him,

"Well, you can sell them, and they'll fetch some money for their novelty value. But not millions. You see, the truth is, Stradivarius wasn't much of a painter... and Van Gogh made lousy violins."

Peter informs his readers of their inheritance.

³Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,
 who according to His great mercy
 has caused us to 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.
 (1Peter 1:1-5)

Peter offers Affirmations of Hope to his readers.

He writes to suffering people of their heavenly inheritance waiting them.

Peter begins by reminding them of their heritage

...born again to a living hope.

There is hope no matter what the circumstances.

I. The New Birth

Why is this a living hope?

It is a living hope because it is grounded in the living word (1:23)
It was made possible by the living Christ who conquered death.

Warren Wiersbe writes,

“A living hope is one that has life in it and therefore can give life to us. Because it has life it grows and becomes greater and more beautiful as time goes on. Time destroys most hopes; they fade and then die. But the passing of time only makes a Christian’s hope that much more glorious.”¹

The new birth was based on Christ’s resurrection from the dead. Since Christ conquered death He will raise every saint from the dead. Even death isn’t permanent for the one born again.

The worse scenario of persecution is overcome by a resurrection.
...O death where is your sting?

The New Birth is a living hope because it conquers the grave.

⁴to *obtain* an inheritance *which is* imperishable and undefiled and will not fade away, reserved in heaven for you, (1 Peter 1:4)

II. A Permanent Inheritance

A heavenly inheritance awaits believers.

God’s Glorious Promise to every Believer is a heavenly inheritance.

The New Living Translation says,

⁴and we have a priceless inheritance—an inheritance that is kept in heaven for you, pure and undefiled, beyond the reach of change and decay. (Vs. 4)

First, we can see that the purpose of our salvation is “***to obtain an inheritance***”. The reason for our salvation is to gain heaven, and inherit its riches. Our new birth makes every believer an heir of eternal life and its eternal riches.

¹ Warren W. Wiersbe, *The Bible Exposition Commentary, Vol. 2*, (Colorado Springs: ChariotVictor Publishing, 1989), p. 392.

Paul writes this to the Corinthians,
 “For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ,
 that though He was rich, yet for your sake He became poor,
 so that you through His poverty might become rich.” (2 Cor. 8:9).

God’s heart has always been to share the riches of His glory with us as His heirs.
 As adopted sons and daughters in God’s family we are heirs.

Paul writes,
 Because you are sons, God has sent forth the Spirit of His Son into our
 hearts, crying, “Abba! Father!” ... and if a son, then an heir
 through God.” (Gal. 4:6-7).

James reasons,
 “...did not God choose the poor of this world to be rich in faith and heirs of
 the kingdom which He promised to those who love Him?”
 (James 2:5).

Again Paul writes to suffering saints,
 “The Spirit Himself testifies with our spirit that we are children of God, and
 if children, heirs also, heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ,
 if indeed we suffer with Him so that we may also be glorified
 with Him. For I consider that the suffering of this present time
 are not worthy to be compared with the glory that is to be
 revealed to us.” (Rom. 8:16-18).

Isaac Watts wrote:
 There is a land of pure delight,
 Where saints immortal reign;
 Infinite day excludes the night,
 And pleasures banish pain.

Suffering Saints should be filled with hope because of their promised inheritance.

Second, our a heavenly inheritance comes with four guarantees.

- Imperishable
- undefiled

- Unfading
- Secure

1. Imperishable – Incorruptible – It will never perish; it is indestructible. Nothing can ruin it! It can never corrode, crack or decay.
It is death-proof.

The inheritance is eternal and will never perish.

2. undefiled – unpolluted and fresh - It will never spoil or decay.

The inheritance is in perfect condition
– No tarnish or stain can dim its purity.
It is sin-proof.

3. Unfading – It remains bright and vital.
- Contrasted to a flower that withers and fades away.

It can never suffer variations in value, glory, or beauty.
It is time-proof.

“It cannot be stained or cheapened in any way.
It will never grow old because it is eternal;
it cannot wear out, nor can it disappoint us in any way” (Wiersbe)

4. Reserved – tereo – “to protect” “to keep” [military term – “to guard”]

The phrase, reserved in heaven for you, speaks of God’s promise
to guard, keep, protect, and reserve our heavenly inheritance for us,
until we get there to receive it.

One Translation

“has been laid up and is now kept guarded in safe deposit.”

Earthly inheritances are uncertain at best.

Sometimes the value of an estate drops sharply because the market declines. Sometimes wills are successfully contested by parties not mentioned in them. Sometimes people are deprived of an inheritance

because of legal technicalities. Sometimes wills are lost or falsified and inheritances stolen by fraud.

But this divine inheritance is not subject to any of the changes of time, and there are no loopholes in the believer's title to it. It is kept in the safety-vault of heaven for the child of God.

The inheritance of the saints is secure and waiting for us.

Our heavenly inheritance is theft-proof, fraud-proof, and mistake-proof.

From our perspective each of the descriptions of our inheritance is in direct contrast of earthly riches; which perish, are corrupt, degrade with time, and are not sound, safe, stable or secure. We realize that everything on earth will perish, and will ultimately be left behind at our death. While we are on earth we have the opportunity to secure heavenly rewards along with our inheritance.

Good works, generous offerings and selfless deeds, secure heavenly rewards.

Jesus describes this,

“Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy, and where thieves break in and steal. But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth and rust destroys, and where thieves do not break in or steal, for where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.” (Matt. 6:19-21).

All earthly treasures will disappoint.

Our eternal inheritance will last forever; they will satisfy eternally.

He is no fool who gives up what he cannot keep to gain what he cannot lose.

Jim Elliot

These verses conclude with God guarding our inheritance for us in heaven.

A secure Journey is also promised.

⁵who are protected by the power of God through faith
for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.

- We have security all the days of our lives.
- We live expectant of Christ's coming with our ultimate salvation.

“...looking for the blessed hope
and the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior,
Christ Jesus, (Titus 2:11-14)

Born again to a Living Hope, looking for the Blessed Hope.