

Today is about the Son of God being raised from the dead. Church, today is about the RESURRECTION! HE IS RISEN! It really happened! Jesus is ALIVE. Today I want to consider with you the reality of the resurrection of Jesus as we consider this text in 1 Peter 1.

The resurrection of Jesus is the ultimate display of God's mercy to the world, and through faith in our risen Lord, we receive blessings beyond our imagination from God.

Here are 4 of those blessings that we see in our text:

1. The blessing of new life.
2. The blessing of living hope.
3. The blessing of inheritance.
- and 4. The blessing of heaven!

1. **The blessing of new life.** “[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...*” (given us new birth NIV)

In order to understand this we need to first realise why we would need new life?

Why do we need to be born again?

Paul answers this in Ephesians 2:1-3

“And you were dead in the trespasses and sins in which you once walked, following the course of this world, following the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that is now at work in the sons of disobedience— among whom we all once lived in the passions of our flesh, carrying out the desires of the body and the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, like the rest of mankind.” (Ephesians 2:1–3)

Simply put, the default state of humanity is sinful, it is the doctrine of the depravity of man. Each one of us inherited our sin nature, we are born with desires of our body and mind that are contrary to God's intent for us.

If you are a parent you know this to be true. I did not need to teach my daughters how to lie, how to be selfish, how to throw tantrums. It comes naturally.

We use terms like “I'm not perfect, I am only human.” We all understand that part of the human condition is moral imperfection.

Romans 3:23 *tells us that all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.*

Romans 6:23 *says the wages of sin is death.*

But the wonderful news of Easter is that though we were born into a world of sin, and through sin were born to die, “**According to God’s great mercy, He has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead**”

Jesus does not just give us a second chance, but a second birth!

Coming to Jesus is not turning over a new leaf, but starting a whole new life!

This is the same foundational truth that **Jesus** said to Nicodemus in John 3 “**you must be born again**” that **Paul** says in 2 Corinthians 5 “**if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come.**” (2 Corinthians 5:17)

“Do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? We were buried therefore with him by baptism into death, in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might walk in newness of life.” (Romans 6:3–4,

Jesus lived a life like you and I, but He alone was without sin, meaning that He did not deserve death, but He went to the cross to die, identifying with our sin, paying the penalty for it. Then, as Romans 6 says, He was raised from the dead, and as we place our trust and faith in Him, we are identified with Him and His victory over sin and death.

We are given new life through the resurrection, a life free from the consequences of our sin, and free from the power that sin once held over our lives.

This is what separates Christianity from the belief systems and self-help philosophies of the world. followers of Jesus are not merely given instructions to obey over the course of our lives - rather; we are given a whole new life!

So, because Jesus lived, died, and rose again into newness of life, we who trust in Him are **given new life as well**, born again into a whole new reality.

additionally - As we place our faith in the risen Lord we receive the blessing of a LIVING HOPE

*“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,” (1 Peter 1:3, ESV)*

Hope: to look forward to something positive in your future.

Hope is an essential element in human existence, when someone loses hope, they have lost the will to live.

Maybe you’ve been there, maybe you know someone who has, when despair sets in, and hope is gone.

Fyodor Dostoevsky (19th century Russian novelist and philosopher) said “To live without Hope is to Cease to live.”

Hope is as essential to our daily survival as water , without hope, we will not have the will to get out of bed in the morning.

So if you got out of bed this morning, you are showing that you do have hope in something!

There was a time when Peter was hopeless -

Maundy Thursday, betraying Jesus, meeting His gaze (matt 26:75 - he went out and “wept bitterly”) Peter was disappointed in himself. He talked so confidently earlier that evening at the Last Supper, but now he failed; he wasn't as virtuous, tough or strong as he imagined himself to be. He let himself down.

2. Good Friday... Jesus let him down. He put his hope in Jesus, but the way things looked, that was a dying and **a dead hope.**

Nothing to hope in within himself, and nothing to hope in outside of himself, Peter was HOPELESS.

What a Contrast between the dead hope of “Good Friday Peter” with the living hope that he is telling us about right now. He was hopeless, and now he tells us that God has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead!

Peter says that when we place our faith in the Risen Lord, we are born again to a LIVING HOPE.

Big difference between what many people think of when they think of hope, and the living hope that Jesus offers.

People can hold out hope for any number of things - a change in the economy, a change in the weather, a change in their relationship status (none of those are bad things) but each has an expiration date - none of these things are eternal. It is temporary.

And more than just temporary - they are also uncertain. Maybe the thing you hope for will come true, maybe it won't.

The best hope that the world can offer is a dying hope because it cannot go beyond the grave. The hope that we have in Jesus is a living Hope, because He conquered the grave.

We're not opposed to temporary hopes (indeed, I have a lot of them) but they must be secondary to the ultimate, Living Hope of the resurrected Christ.

It is certain, it is eternal. it is a living hope.

What does this look like? that brings us to our 3rd blessing.

3. Through faith in the risen Lord, we receive the blessing of inheritance. "*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,*"

I've actually never received an inheritance. I come from a very small family (on both sides) so that probably explains it.... but there also is the fact that i'm not a very likeable guy!

An inheritance is always bittersweet because someone has to die for you to receive it

Getting a loved one's wealth is a small condolence for their death, because you lose the person. More stuff and money does not make up for the void of a dear family member.

But the beauty of our inheritance from Jesus, is yes we receive it because of a death, Jesus has died. But He did not stay dead, so our inheritance in Christ is *not just his wealth* but *His presence* as well!

all that is His is ours as well, and the chiefest blessing of all, He have Him.

This inheritance is imperishable, undefiled, and unfading never growing old, wearing out, running out of batteries or petrol. Always and forever.

Sounds like a great inheritance; *where do we go to collect it?*

Post office slips - it means that you have something that was too big to fit through your mail slot, but you have to go drive across town to get it.

I remember the first time I got one of these in about 2004, we lived on Washington Street and very rarely left the city centre - I had no idea where Togher was - packed by bag with supplies for the long trek to the Southside An-Post collection site. Before smartphones and google maps and siri, so I got lost more than once, and eventually made it, and collected a care package from my mom.

Our inheritance, which is imperishable, undefiled, and unfading is kept in heaven for you.

Maybe right now, you are just as confused and perplexed as I was when I first got the An-Post slip in my mail slot. There's something waiting for you, but you don't know how to get there.

Maundy Thursday / Last Supper - right before Jesus is betrayed and the events of Good Friday are set in motion; He says this to His disciples around the dinner table: (speaking about heaven)

"In my Father's house are many rooms. If it were not so, would I have told you that I go to prepare a place for you? And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and will take you to myself, that where I am you may be also. And you know the way to where I am going." Thomas said to him, "Lord, we do not know where you are going. How can we know the way?" Jesus said to him, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me." (John 14:2-6, ESV) - so what is the way to heaven? It is through Jesus and Him alone. As we place our faith in the resurrected Son of God, the gates of heaven, which were previously barred, are flung open wide to us.

The fourth blessing that Peter tells us that is ours because of the resurrection is **The blessing of heaven.** (v.4) Where is this inheritance stored for us? It is awaiting us in heaven, where is it kept? it is verse 4 says “kept in heaven for you”

What good is that if we don't know how to get there?

We get there through faith in Jesus .

What good is that if we feel that we don't have the energy to make it there?

God promises to get us there.

“an inheritance that is imperishable, undefiled, and unfading, kept in heaven for you, **who by God's power are being guarded through faith** for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.” (1 Peter 1:4–5)

God's power is guarding us by faith -

“And I am sure of this, that He who began a good work in you will bring it to completion at the day of Jesus Christ.” (Philippians 1:6)

“Twas Grace that taught my heart to fear and grace will lead me home. “

to summarise the four blessings of the resurrection: Because Jesus lived, died and rose again; we who place our faith in Him are given new life, we have a living hope, we receive a perfect inheritance and we have a blessed assurance of heaven itself ...

V.6 in this you REJOICE.

This is great! This would be a great place to end the sermon - But wait, it goes on! The resurrection is not just something to get excited about at Easter, it is power that gets us through the day-to-day struggles of our day-to-day lives.

We have a “living hope” that means, that our faith inspires and infuses power into our living. Hope is for living - not just for dying. or to put it another way, living hope doesn't just affect where we go when we die, but how we live before we die!

2 thoughts about the power of this “living hope” that comes to us through faith in the resurrected Lord Jesus.

allows us to rejoice in the midst of grief and trial (v6)

belief in a Saviour who has stood trial, and was acquainted with grief, has a strange way of equipping us to deal with our own grief and trials, doesn't it?

Our faith doesn't make us immune to grief, but the eternal perspective that we are given by the resurrection of Jesus gives us living hope, even in the face of death itself.

allows us to see that our faith is more valuable than the riches of this world (v7)

Rather than grief extinguishing our faith, it can actually show that our faith is more valuable than gold. Faith in Jesus is not just a coping mechanism for those who are sad - it is also the antidote to the allure of the destructiveness of greed and consumerism. Faith is more valuable than gold.

“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, obtaining the outcome of your faith, the salvation of your souls.” (1 Peter 1:8–9, ESV)