

Praise be to God 1 Peter 1:3–5 (NKJV)

3 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His **abundant mercy** has begotten us again to **a living hope** through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, 4 to **an inheritance** incorruptible and undefiled and that does not fade away, reserved in heaven for you, 5 **who are kept by the power** of God through faith for salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.

Peter begins with a long sentence. It encompasses verse 3-9.

These have been subdivided by Bible translators to help us get this in to a more manageable portion.

These verses are verses of praise to God as we will see.

It is similar to the way Paul began several of his letters.

To praise God is the natural expression of the grace we have received from God.

Let us consider this not just as it reflects Peter's feelings but as these should be and are our feelings.

I. Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ

A. Blessed

1. **The word blessed**, which is used here, is a different word from the blessed that is used in the Sermon on the Mount. The word used here is the Greek word from which we derive our word eulogy. It means "to praise." In the New Testament this word is never used in reference to man. God does not praise man, but man is to praise God, and He is the Father. *J. Vernon McGee, Thru the Bible Commentary: The Epistles (1 Peter), electronic ed., vol. 54 (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1991), 23.*
2. It begins with a **doxology, a hymn of praise**, to God—but a doxology with a difference. *William Barclay, The Letters of James and Peter, 3rd ed. fully rev. and updated., The New Daily Study Bible (Louisville, KY; London: Westminster John Knox Press, 2003), 198.*
3. **The Israelites of old praised God as the creator** of the world (2 Chron. 2:12) and as their redeemer from Egyptian slavery (Deut. 4:20). Peter develops the characteristic Jewish approach by adopting an explicitly Christian stance. He praises God as the Father of his unique Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, and as the One who raised this Jesus from the dead. **As a Christian, Peter blesses God for the new creation**, as expressed in the new birth of believers, and for divine provision for them of "an inheritance" of a promised land "in heaven," safe beyond the slavery of sin

or the frenzy of foes. *Norman Hillyer, 1 and 2 Peter, Jude, Understanding the Bible Commentary Series (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2011), 31.*

B. God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.

1. Most pagans would begin their letters with a similar opening.
 - a. Only they praised the gods of their fathers.
2. Our God is very specific.
 - a. He is the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.
 - b. That is why it makes a difference in which god you worship for only our God is the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.

II. Who according to His abundant mercy

A. “I see in the text, as the source of all the rest, ABUNDANT MERCY. No other attribute could have helped us had “mercy” refused. As we are by nature, justice condemns us, holiness frowns upon us, power crushes us, truth confirms the threatening of the law, and wrath fulfils it. It is from the mercy of God that all our hopes begin.” *Spurgeon; Joseph S. Exell, The Biblical Illustrator: I. Peter (London: James Nisbet & Co., n.d.), 12.*

B. All that we have from God is because of His abundant mercy.

1. Not mercy that we deserved but we even rejected in our natural lost condition.
2. Abundant mercy is the answer.
 - a. Why did God save us?
 - b. How could he consider forgiving us?
 - c. How could we escape condemnation?
 - d. How could we be secure in our relationship to God?
3. It is no wonder that 136th Psalm says “His mercy endures forever” 26 times.

III. Has begotten us again

A. This of course goes back to the meeting of Nicodemus in John 3

1. Jesus tells Nicodemus that he must be born again or from above in order to make it to heaven.
2. Nicodemus could not understand but it was still true.
3. We were born in Adam’s likeness.

4. But we must be born anew in Christ's likeness.
- B. Someone once asked me, "Do you really need to be born again to get to heaven?"
1. The answer is absolutely.
- IV. To a living hope
- A. What have we been begotten too? A living hope.
1. But what does he mean by this?
 2. **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. *Warren W. Wiersbe, The Bible Exposition Commentary, vol. 2 (Wheaton, IL: Victor Books, 1996), 392.*
 3. To the ancient world, **the Christian characteristic was hope.** That hope came from two things. (a) Christians felt that they had been born not of perishable but of imperishable seed (1 Peter 1:23). They had something of the very seed of God in them and, therefore, had in them a life which neither time nor eternity could destroy. (b) It came from the resurrection of Jesus Christ (1 Peter 1:3). Christians had always beside them—even more, were one with—this Jesus Christ who had conquered even death, and therefore there was nothing of which they needed to be afraid. *William Barclay, The Letters of James and Peter, 3rd ed. fully rev. and updated., The New Daily Study Bible (Louisville, KY; London: Westminster John Knox Press, 2003), 199.*
 4. This hope is still physical, for we learn from 2 Peter that it will be realized in **a new heaven and new earth** (2 Pet 3:13; cf. Rev 21:1–22:5. *Thomas R. Schreiner, 1, 2 Peter, Jude, vol. 37, The New American Commentary (Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 2003), 62.*
 5. It is not so much that believers are now living "full of hope," but that they have a fixed "hope," a clear vision of what God will do for them in the future. *Scot McKnight, 1 Peter, The NIV Application Commentary (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 1996), 70–71.*
- B. Through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead,
1. Everything depends upon Jesus.
 2. He suffered, died and rose again.
 3. Without that there is nothing.
 - a. No mercy

- b. No salvation
 - c. No hope
 - d. No inheritance
4. All spiritual blessings come to us through Jesus.
 5. Ephesians 1:3-12 (NKJV)
 - a. 3 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ, 4 just as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love, 5 having predestined us to adoption as sons by Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will, 6 to the praise of the glory of His grace, by which He has made us accepted in the Beloved. 7 In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace 8 which He made to abound toward us in all wisdom and prudence, 9 having made known to us the mystery of His will, according to His good pleasure which He purposed in Himself, 10 that in the dispensation of the fullness of the times He might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven and which are on earth--in Him. **11 In Him also we have obtained an inheritance**, being predestined according to the purpose of Him who works all things according to the counsel of His will, 12 that we who first trusted in Christ should be to the praise of His glory.

V. To an inheritance

A. An inheritance.

1. Well the passage in Ephesians 1 we just read pretty much lays that out.
2. Romans 8:17–18 (NKJV)
 - a. 17 and if children, then heirs—heirs of God and **joint heirs with Christ**, if indeed we suffer with Him, that we may also be glorified together. 18 For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us.

B. Incorruptible

1. No decay. Jesus said were moth and rust does not decay.
2. Everything in this world is corruptible.
 - a. Look where you used to live.

b. Look at the great nations of the world, their cities have turned to dust and all the glory of them is gone.

3. But our inheritance is perfect, eternal.

C. Undefined

1. The land of Israel we defiled continuously by those invaders that came into the land.

2. It was even defiled by the Israelites themselves.

3. But our inheritance cannot be touched by the things that defile this world.

4. Nothing like that cannot enter there.

D. Does not fade away

1. Plant a beautiful flower and it grows and becomes quite beautiful but then at the height of its beauty it begins to fade and wither.

2. Look at the picture album and see those young people there and then go look in the mirror and things have faded haven't they.

3. But our new body, and all that goes with it, will never fade or wither it will be a land where we never grow old.

E. Reserved in heaven for you

1. **Reserved in heaven for you.** I remember when I was working for ALCOA I had to travel to Pittsburgh for a meeting. The company put me up at the Westin in downtown. But I had taken a late flight and gotten in late and by the time I got to the hotel it was almost midnight. I walked up to the desk and asked about my reserved room. Right away I could tell that something was wrong. They had given my room to someone else supposing that I was not coming. But they found me a room, a very nice room. You know that when I get to heaven my room is RESERVED in all caps.

VI. Who are kept

A. Kept has the idea of being guarded by a garrison of soldiers.

1. It is used of putting garrisons in a city to protect it from foes (cf. Jdt 3:6; 1 Esdr 4:56; Wis 17:16; 2 Cor 11:32; see also Phil 4:7). *Thomas R. Schreiner, 1, 2 Peter, Jude, vol. 37, The New American Commentary (Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 2003), 64.*

B. By the power of God

1. **Believers are not kept by their own power, but by the power of God.** Our faith in Christ has so united us to Him that His power now guards us

and guides us. We are not kept by our strength, but by His faithfulness. How long will He guard us? Until Jesus Christ returns and we will share in the full revelation of His great salvation. *Warren W. Wiersbe, The Bible Exposition Commentary, vol. 2 (Wheaton, IL: Victor Books, 1996), 392.*

2. Ephesians 1:13–14 (NKJV)

a. 13 In Him you also trusted, after you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation; in whom also, having believed, **you were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise, 14 who is the guarantee of our inheritance** until the redemption of the purchased possession, to the praise of His glory.

3. Jude 24–25 (NKJV)

a. 24 Now to Him who is able to keep you from stumbling, And to present you faultless Before the presence of His glory with exceeding joy, 25 To God our Savior, Who alone is wise, Be glory and majesty, Dominion and power, Both now and forever. Amen.

4. If his power plays no role in our faith, then it seems that his power accomplishes nothing in our making it to the end—since it is precisely unbelief and failure to hope in God that causes us to fall away from God. If God’s power does not protect us from unbelief, it is hard to see what it does. *Thomas R. Schreiner, 1, 2 Peter, Jude, vol. 37, The New American Commentary (Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 2003), 65.*

C. Through faith for salvation

1. Salvation is never without faith.

a. Hebrews 11:6 (NKJV)

(1) 6 But without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him.

D. Ready to be revealed in the last time.

1. We have an inheritance but we haven’t come into it yet.

2. But when it’s all rolled up we will have all that we have been promised.

3. Hebrews 11:13–16 (NKJV)

a. 13 These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off were assured of them, embraced them and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth. 14 For those who say such things declare plainly that they seek a homeland. 15 And truly if they had called to mind that country

from which they had come out, they would have had opportunity to return. 16 But now they desire a better, that is, a heavenly country. Therefore God is not ashamed to be called their God, for He has prepared a city for them.