

Abundant Mercy

1 Peter 1:3-5

Introduction – Peter begins with a song of praise to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. The words are so full and rich with meaning and implications. Each phrase can be savored for a moment now, and for the rest of your life if you see these things with faith.

Abundant Mercy – The praise and obedience of the church today is pathetic because we do not grasp the depth of Christ’s mercy (Eph 3:14-19). Semi-Pelagianism is the technical term for believing that we were sick, but not dead, in our sins. We don’t believe that we were really all that bad as sinners. But we were transgressors from the womb (Is 48:8). Here is an example of what American modern evangelicalism denies – your theology matters.

Blessing God – Mercy without a top or a bottom, and mercy with sides that never end, when apprehended by faith, results in a song. This mercy came from God, who is to be blessed forever. Our blessings of God are not the same as His blessings of us (Neh 9:4-5), but we are called to offer our sacrifice of praise nonetheless (Heb 13:15). The following are the topics of our blessing, the fruit of His mercy.

Begotten Again – You cannot learn the steps so that you can be born again. It is not something you do. It is something God does and you bless Him for it. While the concept of adoption is true for those who have been brought to the Father through Christ, it is not enough. Adoption grants us the *status* of sons; regeneration grants us the *nature* of sons.

Living Hope – ‘I hope it is sunny tomorrow’ is not the kind of hope described here. This hope is sealed with the Holy Spirit as our down-payment (Eph 1:13-14). This living hope goes all the way to the grave, for even death is a messenger sent to bring those in Christ home to possess their inheritance. Not so for the man without this hope (Prov 11:7, 14:32).

Through the Resurrection – Jesus Christ rose from the dead and is the cause of our new life. Because He is the ‘firstborn from the dead’, we have this hope (Rev 1:5, Acts 13:13, Ps 2:7). But this hope is *exclusively* through His resurrection – there is no other way (Acts 4:12, John 14:6).

A Different Kind of Inheritance – Proverbs teaches that “*a good man leaves an inheritance to his children’s children*” (13:22), but nothing compared to that of our heavenly Father. Our inheritance in Christ is Christ (Psalm 16:5-6).

Incorrutable – It cannot decay, for our inheritance is Christ (Rom 1:23, Ps 16:10).

Undefiled – There will be no stain in the beauty or excellency of it, for our inheritance is Christ (Heb 7:26).

Does Not Fade – No matter what you have done, your inheritance cannot fade, for it is Christ (Psalm 102:27), and He is for your children as well (v28).

Reserved in Heaven – Christ, your inheritance, sits in heaven, and who can stand against Him? (Ps 2:4-9).

Good Meditation, Good Motivation – Peter wants his readers meditating on these descriptions of their inheritance. It will keep them faithful in afflictions (2 Cor 4:17-18), rejoicing in those trials (Rom 5:2-3), and despising the pleasures of sin (Heb 11:25). It is a good thing to obey with an eye to the reward. Stoicism is not called for in the scriptures. God calls us to pursue the reward, running as to win (1 Cor 9:24).

Kept By the Power of God – ‘*froureo*’ is a military term used to describe the work of a garrison or strong guard. But this ‘*keeping*’ is even stronger, for the Guard of our salvation is God Himself. Our redemption was all the work of God, and so is our perseverance. We cannot lose our salvation, for it is not ours to lose. It is the Lord’s. The inheritance cannot be lost, and the inheritors cannot be lost either.

Through Faith – Neither our salvation nor our perseverance finds its ground in our faith. The ground of these things is the Lord Jesus Christ and His power alone. But the means of both is our faith.

For Salvation – In one sense, our salvation is that wall of protection (Is 26:1-4, Prov 18:10). In another sense we see that we are kept *for that final salvation* still to be revealed.

To Be Revealed – Here is why you bless God. He predestined the salvation of the elect before the foundations of the world. The final end of this work takes place at the end of time (this age). Even though in Adam we were guilty of sin and worthy of eternal wrath, we have a sure hope of eternal life. Our sins have been forgiven, but we still walk in the shadows of the fullness of our freedom from the power of sin. But if you are in Christ, one day you will be completely united to Him, you will have perfect rest, your body will be resurrected and glorified, all of those in Christ will be united together in perfect fellowship as the completed body of Christ, we will sit down at the great Wedding Feast, and the music of this new song will be complete.