

Blessed Be God

Do you know why God keeps you in His power?

First Peter 1.3–5

Don Ruhl • Savage Street, Grants Pass, Oregon • April 15, AD 2012

Scripture Reader and Reading: Luke – John 10.27–29

Prelude:

I. Beautiful on the Wrong Side

- A. “A little city girl was in the country for the first time and saw the night sky.
- B. “Oh, mother, if heaven is so beautiful on the wrong side, what must it be like on the right side!” (Encyclopedia of 7700 Illustrations, #2179).
 - 1. I want to show you from First Peter One
 - 2. that what is on the right side
 - a) does not have the negative characteristics
 - b) of the wrong side.

II. While on the wrong side we might be pilgrims on the earth, and

- A. those in high places may wish to disperse us, yet,
- B. according to First Peter 1.1, 2,
 - 1. God the Father has chosen us,
 - 2. sanctified us in the Spirit,
 - 3. sprinkled us with blood of Jesus Christ,
 - a) we have obeyed Him, and
 - b) He has poured out His grace upon us,
 - c) giving us peace that multiplies endlessly.

III. Having said that, the apostle of Jesus Christ

- A. lifts our vision above this earth to our glorious hope, and
- B. assures us of what we have coming.

Persuasion:

I. First Peter 1.3a – Bless God

3 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ... (1Pe 1.3).

A. Because of what the Father, the Spirit, and the Son have done for us, and

1. because of something that awaits us,
2. the apostle breaks forth in praise of God.

B. Blessed be God,

1. let us speak well of Him, for
2. Peter used the Greek word that means to speak well of,
 - a) as opposed to the word Matthew uses in recording The Beatitudes,
 - b) “Blessed are the poor in spirit,” happy are the poor in spirit.

C. Bless God

1. for His enabling us to live;
2. for revealing the Scriptures;
3. for hearing and answering our prayers;
4. for saving us from wrath through the sacrifice of His Son.

II. First Peter 1.3–5 – Why We Bless God

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 (1Pe 1.3–5).

A. Bless God for begetting again.

1. He through our biological parents gave us life in the body.
2. Then through His abundant mercy, God gave us life in the spirit.
 - a) Grace gives what we do not deserve.
 - b) Mercy withholds what we do deserve.
 - (1) We deserved eternal banishment, but
 - (2) God through His mercy gave us another chance.
3. He has begotten us again to a *living* hope.
 - a) Born of our mothers,
 - (1) we were born with hope of so many things that we could do, but
 - (2) our final days will end in death.
 - b) Born again of God,
 - (1) our days do not end, but
 - (2) we live eternally.
 - (a) We are born again with hope for what we can be on earth, and
 - (b) the hope magnifies for what we have in heaven.
4. All of this made possible by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead.
 - a) The death of Jesus seemed to end hope for the followers of Christ, but
 - b) His resurrection revived that hope.
 - (1) He died for our sins, and
 - (2) when we are baptized we are buried for our sins, but
 - (a) He was resurrected from the dead, and
 - (b) we come up out of the water with our own resurrections.
5. As He once lived, so we once lived.
 - a) As He died, so we die with Him.

b) As He was raised from the dead, so we are raised from the dead,

3 Or do you not know that as many of us as were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His death? 4 Therefore we were buried with Him through baptism into death, that just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life (Rom 6.3, 4).

B. We bless God for our unsurpassable inheritance.

1. Consider that we even have an inheritance.

a) You may have an inheritance coming with your earthly family, but

b) if you belong to the greatest family ever you have something far greater.

2. The inheritance is incorruptible.

a) It cannot decay.

b) Moth, rust, and thieves cannot touch it.

(1) God initiated decay on earth in response to Adam and Eve's sin.

(2) Therefore, He can create a place where deterioration does not exist,

19 “Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal; 20 but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal. 21 For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also” (Matt 6.19–21).

3. The inheritance is undefiled.

a) Sin does not and cannot tarnish it.

b) The wicked cannot defile our inheritance because they will not be there,

27 But there shall by no means enter it anything that defiles, or causes an abomination or a lie, but only those who are written in the Lamb's

Book of Life (Rev 21.27).

4. The inheritance does not fade away.
 - a) It does not decrease in value.
 - b) Its excitement does not wear out.
 - c) The beauty of it remains.
5. How can we understand a spiritual inheritance in the spiritual place heaven?
 - a) Therefore, Peter used three negatives to help us see what it is not.
 - (1) It is not corruptible.
 - (2) It is not defiled.
 - (3) It does not fade away.
 - b) Regarding the last two,
 - (1) he used some interesting words, not apparent in English.
 - (2) He wrote that the inheritance
 - (a) ἀμίαντον και ἀμόραντον
 - (b) or in English letters, you can see the internal rhyme,
 - i) am i an ton and
 - ii) am a ran ton.
6. God reserves the inheritance in heaven for us.
 - a) God had us specifically in mind when He created this inheritance.
 - b) God does not say that He is spending His children's inheritance.
 - (1) There will be no problems getting this inheritance, because
 - (2) He has written your name in the Lamb's reservation book, the Book of Life!
7. Now, be sure to nail down Peter's next point, because

- a) while we know of this magnificent inheritance,
 - b) can someone take it from us or can someone take us from it?
- C. We are kept by, or literally “in” the power of God.

1. Do not forget
 - a) who is on our side and
 - b) whose side we are on.
2. We think of
 - a) how much we have to hold on to Him, but
 - b) think also of Him holding on to us!
 - (1) Now, true, we are grownups and
 - (2) if we desire to wrestle out of His hand,
 - (a) He will let go, but
 - (b) He will not let go
 - i) if we are tired,
 - ii) if we are discouraged,
 - iii) if we are weak,
 - iv) if we are attacked.
3. Can anything or anyone over power God?

27 “My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me. 28 And I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; neither shall anyone snatch them out of My hand. 29 My Father, who has given them to Me, is greater than all; and no one is able to snatch them out of My Father’s hand” (John 10.27–29).

4 You are of God, little children, and have overcome them, because He who is in you is greater than he who is in the world (1Jo 4.4).

- a) **They both hold on to us.**
- 4. Peter wrote that we are kept or better, “guarded”
 - a) which is a military term.
 - b) God uses His army, the host of heaven, to guard us,

[2Ki 6.8–17]

16 So he answered, “Do not fear, for those who are with us are more than those who are with them.” 17 And Elisha prayed, and said, “LORD, I pray, open his eyes that he may see.” Then the LORD opened the eyes of the young man, and he saw. And behold, the mountain was full of horses and chariots of fire all around Elisha (2Ki 6.16, 17).

- (1) That was not just for Elisha,

**7 The angel of the LORD encamps all around those who fear Him,
And delivers them.
(Psa 34.7)**

- (2) That was not just the Old Testament,

14 Are [the angels] not all ministering spirits sent forth to minister for those who will inherit salvation? (Heb 1.14).

- 5. God guards us in His power through our faith (v. 5) and obedience (v. 2),
 - a) which implies an anticipated attack, and
 - (1) the attack will be strong enough
 - (2) necessitating the power of God to guard us.
- 6. However,

- a) not only is the inheritance being kept for us,
 - b) we are being kept for the inheritance.
- D. God guards us for salvation yet to be revealed.
- 1. He saves us from our sins now, and
 - 2. He will save us from wrath later
 - a) when He sends Jesus Christ
 - b) to rescue His followers from earth's destruction and from hell.

Exhortation:

I. What should you get out of Peter's words?

- 3 He will not allow your foot to be moved;
He who keeps you will not slumber.
- 4 Behold, He who keeps Israel
Shall neither slumber nor sleep.
(Psa 121.3, 4)

II. Every judgment promised in the past God brought to pass,

- A. except when He gave people time to repent, and
- B. they repented.
 - 1. Remember Jonah gave the Ninevites forty days to repent.
 - a) Later Nineveh did not repent at Nahum's preaching.
 - b) We finally discovered Nineveh in the 19th century.
 - 2. God gave Noah's generation 120 years to repent.
 - a) Those who did not repent died in the Flood.
 - b) You can see the evidence of it as you drive through cut hills.

III. Peter hinted in verse 4

- A. that something wonderful heads our way, but

B. in verse 5 something horrible from which we need salvation.

IV. You need to do something about that right now.

A. We urge you to believe that Jesus is the Son of God.

B. We urge you to change your manner of life to conform to the life of Jesus.

C. We urge you to get inside the spiritual body of Christ through baptism.

V. Christian, you have a clear title to the inheritance in heaven.

A. It is yours without money, for the price Someone already paid.

B. It is not a vacant lot, nor swamp land in Florida.

C. By your manner of life you send building material to heaven.

D. Termites, fire, and floods cannot ruin that inheritance.

E. You will not need locks on the doors, for no impenitent criminals shall be there.

F. A dark valley exists between your home and the inheritance, but

1. do not despair, because

2. Jesus went through the valley already, and

a) He came through okay, and

b) assures you that He will be with you during your journey.

G. The ticket to the inheritance is a one way ticket, and

1. you do not have to come up with baggage fees, because

2. you cannot bring anything with you, for

a) whatever you need to live and to enjoy the inheritance,

b) God has provided richly.

VI. However, let me say this,

A. “Heaven must be in me before I can be in haven” (Stanford).

- B. “No man will go to heaven when he dies who has not sent his heart thither while he lives” (Daniel Wilson).
- C. “In order to be heaven-bound, we must be heaven-born” (*Sourcebook for Speakers*).