

Praise Be To God

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Date: 04 September 2022

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[0 : 00] First of all, let me say how good it is to be able to come and thank Thomas for the invitation to do so. And it brings back many happy recollections of our gospel unity next door and here and here next door then and it's so encouraging to hear that that keenness for Christ working together continues on. So thank you for the invitation through Thomas to come tonight.

Now I wonder if you are familiar with some Glasgow terminology. H.O.R. Jimmy being interpreted H.E. James or as the bus conductors used to call when coming to a stop, come on and get off. Those intending to a light here, come on and get off. Or to bring things into a more Christian setting, there was an older man from Glasgow who had become a Christian, a somewhat simple minded character, but who came to know the Lord Jesus in a very real way. He was coming up to Easter and he wanted to be baptized on Easter Sunday and his young pastor met him during the week before to go over the service that was to come and explained that when at the service he, the pastor would say, the Lord Christ is risen. He will respond, he is risen indeed. Which when the Sunday came, the pastor did, the Lord Christ is risen.

There was a silence for a moment and the dear older man forgotten what he had to say, he is risen indeed. When the man then replied, I am right son and there's ne dut about it.

There was a teacher at college who used to say, if we do not believe in the bodily resurrection of the Lord Jesus, all we have is a ghost for a saviour. So our certainty, yes no ghost, the saviour died, really, yes, but rose again, triumphant over the grave and there is no doubt about it. And this evening we shall see from the Bible two tremendous blessings, riches, glories that follow from that certainty and that impact our lives if we love the Lord or should do here in Carlway or wherever we are in this world as this world is where the rubber of our lives hits the road. Now of course we all realise that we could, in instance, many things that follow from our Lord's resurrection rising from the grave are simply going to focus on two verses within the verses that we read a moment or two ago in 1 Peter chapter 1. Verse 3 which promises that we have a living hope following our Lord Jesus rising from the dead. And verse 4 where Peter tells us about the inheritance that we have as believers. So living hope and our inheritance. Now of course they are connected since ultimately our living hope is the always alive hope in us of our inheritance. But notice to begin with who is happily, absolutely, unmistakably at the heart of it all is the reason for it all. We see in verse 3, I don't know if you use the screens or you have your Bibles, I'm using the NIV, I apologise for that but there's not that much difference from the ESV that we write. So we notice to begin with in verse 3 who's the reason for it all. And we see there right at the beginning of verse 3, God is praise be to the God and

[4 : 49] Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. Now that word translated in this verse in praise, whereas it blessed it out here in the ESV, is the word that gives us our word today, eulogy. It means to speak well of, to speak in glowing terms about. Now you get Paul doing that in Ephesians 1 verse 3 as well. In fact that verse in Ephesians 1 3 starts a sentence in the original that goes on and stands for 202 words that speak well of God.

For all the wonderful things he has done for us. And it's as if Paul can't stop. Think, what would your English teacher have said if you had handed in an essay with 202 words sentence in it, at very least he or she would have said, what's happened to the punctuation?

Well you don't get a sentence like that from Peter, but you get the same kind of explosion of praise. How tremendous God is, the God we know in his Son, God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. Not a faceless God or an awesome God we can't really imagine and from whom we would cower away. We know him as we find him in the Lord Jesus his Son. And we might well say to someone who comes and tells us, oh you can't know God. What God's like?

No, no, no. He is what Jesus is. Get your new testament out and read the Gospels we would tell them. Well says Peter in Ephesians, come on everyone. Bless him, praise him, speak well of him, eulogise him with all your heart and he may have had in mind and added and your voices too. Peter might have said to us, get your sandbook out and turn to sing.

Now bless be the Lord our God and blessed be his glorious name. Who's at the heart of it? The reason for it? Our living hope and our inheritance? God is. And we'll put four questions to Peter about our living hope and notice four features about our inheritance and that to put it all in a really practical context for them and for us now. Someone says this, if we bear in mind Peter's main purpose in writing this epistle, namely to encourage hard press believers to hold on in the face of persecution and opposition, then we shall understand more fully the implications of what he is saying here. So four questions about our living hope and we simply put these questions to Peter, to the Bible here and let him let it give us answers for the role here. One, what's behind it? Two, how do we come by it?

[8 : 21] Three, what do we get? And four, on what grounds? What's behind it? We're asking first. What's behind this great thing that he has done for us so that we can have this living hope? What's behind it? Well sees answer. There's three in his great mercy. I like how someone puts what mercy is. Mercy they say is the outward expression of pity, the outward expression of pity. And in this, it assumes need on the part of him who receives it and resources adequate to meet that need on the part of him who shows it. Question, is our world needing to be dead without this new life of God dead in so many ways, the borders of its desires and concerns narrow and often confined to only about us and to suit self. And we call to the state of the world today fear and hopelessness abounding, unforgiving and essentially with nothing more to live for than a horizontal only plane of life and living for just now.

Meaningless and chasing after the wind only as the writer to ecclesiastic puts it, it is needy. And but by his great mercy, which knew the need absolutely, which saw our position exactly, which chose us and determined that things were going to be different. And in the resources of his power in the gospel, the power of God to salvation, he came to us, he brought us to faith and into a living relationship with Jesus. Resources adequate indeed to meet the need in the power of the life changing and therefore world changing gospel. Are we dead anymore? No, alive. Do we have narrow borders anymore? No, the world's are concerned. Isn't that why we when we are in normal circumstances building wise is that why not why we have a world map at the prayer meeting and why we listen to the news is hopelessness the only thing on the menu? No, Christ is king. And we have his purposes to live for.

Is the world simply running on an inevitable and possibly catastrophic end or else just puffing out and last like a burnt out match? No, Christ will make everything new in a new heaven a new earth that will have no end. What's behind that change for the world and for all who will have it? God's great mercy. Seeing the need, caring about the need and the resources of his love coming and meeting the need in his gospel in his son in his savior.

Peter might well have said to us well now sing the old words a debtor to mercy alone. How do we come by it? See how our second question in his great mercy. How do we come by it?

He has given us new birth. We come by it by being given by being brought into a new birth.

[12 : 53] And there is something we always have to remember don't we that the change from hopelessness to hope is one as far as the east is from the west. It's a total turnaround in the opposite direction. There was a man in Airdrie, Lanarkshire years ago who let's say was something of a wild man and was known for being so particularly on Friday and Saturday nights. However he heard the gospel and was wonderfully converted. Now he normally came home very much worse the way of drink and that with language to match but when coming home the night he was converted became a Christian instead of as usual kicking the door in to get in he turned the handle and went in and because the dog didn't recognise him he bit him. The love of God in the gospel had so struck Dunke Donaldson the Lord Jesus by his Holy Spirit had come into his heart that he then certainly did change his ways and put his godless ways behind him turning around 180 degrees but how did he come by it not by deserving it could we rather say by God coming to him and giving him new birth. And of course Port Peter points here to the completeness of the change that God brings about in the image he uses. God has given us new birth and what's newer than that? What's more of a total change coming from one world to another than that? And we know that when the Lord Jesus in these familiar words in John 3 says no one can see the kingdom of God unless he is born

again and verse 7 there you should not be surprised and my saying to you must be born again he is obviously speaking about the Holy Spirit's work in a person. We can't make ourselves naturally born it's something that happens to us and no one can become a believer by just deciding to have a change well I think I'll follow Jesus now. When we come to Christ when in mercy the Holy Spirit comes and moves and works in us and brings us to the birth and then of course to trust in the Savior. Did we understand and appreciate with our hearts things in the Bible if we had any notion about them at all before we became a Christian?

And maybe it's still like that if we are not yet a believer. I remember knowing about Matthew and Mark and Luke and John and I was pretty much in the dark with the rest. Whereas if we are believers now we're alive to God spiritual deadness is gone now God's come out of the dark for us now we know the light of who he is and of being a Christian who knows and loves and enjoys him having been delivered from the dominion of darkness into the kingdom of his beloved son. How do we come by it? In his great mercy we have a new Holy Spirit birth and just before we go on and we must press on it would be important just to check.

We're in church this evening and that's great but have we an interest in God and of course more than an interest is the Lord Jesus one we know and we love and want to share with all our hearts. There's a Christian song that was popular when I was young and here's what it says he is my everything he is my all he is my everything both great and small he gave his life for me made everything new he is my everything how about you so in church yes great this evening he is my everything how about you how do we come by it a Holy Spirit new birth and we do move on what do we get thirdly that is what is this all about it's about verse 3 a living hope it's what Peter's saying here but don't forget Paul it is 202 word sentence all the believer gets at the start of that if he's in one verse 3 the blessing spiritual blessings from heaven but here Peter it's a living hope now of course hope looks to the future doesn't it as a future as we're built into it we speak about hope at an everyday level it might be I'm going to the mainland tomorrow I hope the ferry is running and even though it's September not fully booked and I have to go by on standby it might be I need to get the washing out after the B&B; folks or the family who have been in holiday leave on Saturday so I hope it won't rain or so that it can get the grass cut because it's still growing that kind of hope has a future in it but it's got an iffy-ness to whether it's ferry disruptions or because of the vagaries of island weather that hope is a hope so hope but you can be a hundred percent sure and it's not Bible hope nor certainly is the hope that answers the question are you a Christian with well

I hope I am but I can't say it would be presumption to say that I am and say that I am a hundred percent sure there's no living hope there and Peter is saying nothing at all about that living hope that's what we get that's what we have in his great mercy he has given us new birth into a living hope we've been brought by a new birth into when with the old him Jesus has come into our heart and of course its future with a capital F2 when there will be death death and health destruction when we are landed safely on Canaan side those who are more senior will perhaps remember the days of the Billy Graham rallies when crowds were drawn to hear the gospel and was the huge mass choir well one thrilling song that they sang was this coming again coming again it may be morning it may be noon it may be evening it may be soon coming again coming again oh what a wonderful day it will be Jesus is coming again that day when he'll come and we'll land safely on Canaan's side you see the world is not going round and round in circles forevermore going nowhere moving to no end and we on it we are heading into the future we are marching to Zion moving into sunrise we may have clouds clouds shrouded valleys to go through but there is no doubt about it the sun is coming that's the goal of our certain and living hope and why is it living hope because it comes from the Lord Jesus living by his Holy Spirit in our hearts a hope that therefore keeps us alive or put it simply a hope that keeps our faith alive faith and keeps us going that's what we get when God brings us into a new life via a new birth a living hope and this is final question to verse 3 and more briefly we'll look at our inheritance before we're done so we're not going to be here to have our seven so don't worry first for the question for us this we are given new birth into a living hope on what grounds through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead and how is that the head of a large English mental hospital said I could dismiss half of my patients tomorrow if they could be assured of forgiveness we know that forgiveness is tied to the death of our Lord Jesus for the first communion remember in the upper room Jesus referred to the blood of the covenant be poured out for the forgiveness of sins but you see if there was no resurrection of the son by the father then there is no certainty that the father has forgiven anyone but raising him the

father says he's done it all he's paid

for everything situations in your life will possibly need forgiveness from you to them and them to you but at bottom where it matters really there is forgiveness with me that living hope but why on what grounds oh Lord through the resurrection of Jesus Christ and the dead where in effect God says I confirmed that to my complete satisfaction the work to deal with sin was done and all who are in my son trusting him they are forgiven and since we don't have a ghost as a savior but rather the Lord of the universe who by his spirit is alive and within the believer no wonder we've a living faith and a hope that keeps us going keeps us going we could say for as long as he keeps going and I seem to remember that Paul says Romans 6 9 for we know that since Christ was raised from the dead he cannot die again glorious well how about our inheritance verse 4 it will have to be far more brief notice four wonderful features though about it which Peter sets out but before we look at each briefly remember two things about an inheritance one it's a gift and something not something we earn and two God's inheritance is given to his children a gift now I don't know very much about the details but my grandfather who died years before I was born was an employee in an office in Glasgow and when the owner of that office that company died he left a gold puppet watch to my grandfather in his will it wasn't part of his wages or any agreement or condition of service he didn't have to do it it was stated as his stated wish and free gift and my grandfather I guess must have been a diligent worker but the owner could have left his watch to someone else of course and I'm sure my grandfather must have got the surprise of his life and have no notion at all that it was coming but from the owner's point of view the watch was a promise and intentional gift and inheritance is not something work for it's a gift and you could leave your bike to a friend or your car to a neighbour but in the Bible God's inheritance is given to his children thinking of the huge contrast and status between the slave in a household and the son in a family you remember [26 : 38] Paul says this to the Galatians you are no longer a slave that was the status you had before you came to trust Christ but a son and since you are a son you are an heir so God's inheritance is for family the question are you family four features one it can never perish perish here means to be destroyed by corruption now in some of these island photography books like from the land comes the cloth you come across an old boat beached and very much worse away from the weather and the elements and time and very much on the way to decay and destruction when we were in Mali part of the parish there was the small isles egg muck rum and canna well an egg at the time there were cars that had seen better days to put it mildly some abandoned where they stopped and now grown up through with briars and ferns and they made the photography books too they were perishing being destroyed by time and decay well our inheritance decayed destroyed no more after a few millennia no it can never perish nor can it spoil the word spoil means to stain or die with another color and so pollute contaminate and you can understand the point when John says in Revelation 21 27 nothing impure will ever enter it the new heaven and earth and you can read the categories of sin and first Corinthians 6 9 which keep us from inheriting that inheritance because it's a pure and it is pure and defiled not spoiled or ever will be but they are in first

Corinthians 6 9 after the list he says in verse 11 11 and that is what some of you where but you are washed you are sanctified you are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the spirit of our God you might be saying reading that list and knowing who you are you might be saying well that's me out anyway but no such were some of you but he's saying to them and to us but now these things are forgiven you are covered in clean in Jesus sinner but saved and the inheritance that will never spoil get sullied or contaminated is yours too and if you are thinking you are out because of what you are wrong if the Lord

Jesus is your savior you are in read Romans 8 1 now there is no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus are we Bible believing Christians and you can see that it won't fade either it is the word in the original that gives an English words which I confess I had to look up in the dictionary Amaranth and it's defined there as a fabled never failing flower an emblem of immortality the flower Amaranth or Amaranthus well that's great that's right our inheritance won't ever fade it won't be like daffodils pretty much do after a few weeks in the spring and the last feature you see it is kept for us kept there kept in heaven for you kept there is a military term used of keeping a garrison or a city it's used of the governor of Damascus remember guarding the city so that Paul wouldn't get away be arrested then he was let down by his friends in a basket remember who says the Bible is not full of drama but that's the word to he had guarded and if God is guarding our inheritance in heaven it's certain there will be no wondering when we get there and look around where is it where is it gone I

thought the Bible said there will be an inheritance here with all the blessings of full salvation but where are they where has it gone there'll be no such questions if it's guarded if it's guardian is God and if no one can snatch us out of his hands now no one will snap it out of his hands then our Lord Christ is risen and there's no doubt about it and if we can say this evening yes we know and love and trust and belong to him then we have a living hope with these four answers about it and a glorious inheritance with these four features of it and a million more so yes Peter prays be to the God and father of our Lord Jesus Christ and blessed be the Lord our God and bless be his holy name and so we do two things we agree with Moses as well when he says of God's people of old and believers of course are the new Israel they the old Israel he says of the old Israel but of us also as the new Israel due to our number 3329 bless are you oh Israel who is like you a people saved by the Lord who is like us humbled and privileged and to know the male storm of what the world is and maybe what your circumstances presently are live with this hope that keeps our faith alive hope and keeps us going anticipating of course is the chief goal of our hope our living hope anticipating our inheritance all because of the resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ and there's no do it about it let's pray our God and gracious father how privileged we are to be your own we realize it is only by your gracious working in our lives in anyone's life giving us a new birth that we can have the hope of the Lord Jesus being our Lord and Savior now and the hope of glory set before us our glorious inheritance in heaven and Lord where the rubber of our lives will meet the road in this week to come we pray that we may be undergirded under pinned confirmed and fortified by these truth that we pray by your grace through faith will apply we ask it in Jesus name. Amen.