



1 Peter

The Journey Home

Headed Home

1 Peter 1:3-12

Message #2 of 12 – S678

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Sunday Morning Service

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Headed Home

1 Peter 1:3-12

Opening Comments

- Turn to **1 Peter 1**
- Today, we continue our series through the first letter from Peter – **The Journey Home**
- Way back in the dark ages when I was in boot camp, I can still remember there were three groups of guys
- In the first group were guys where every day was one day more that they had been away from their families
- The second group were guys who were struggling with the difficult reality of what they were going through
- The third group were guys where every day was one day closer to going home to their families and on to the next part of their lives
- Which group do you think was more successful? The third group
- The first group was homesick – the second was miserable – the third group was excited and motivated
- That is exactly what God is trying to instill within every Christian
- This world is not our home – and we need to endure whatever this world throws at us while we wait for God’s perfect timing to bring us home to heaven
- Peter wants to share with his readers and with us the hope that truth can bring to us – no matter what our circumstances might be
- If you are able and willing to do so, please stand as we read today’s text as a sign of reverence for God’s Word
- Read **1 Peter 1:3-12**
- **Pray**

Teaching

- **Headed Home**
- Let’s get right into our text
- **1 Peter 1:3-5**
- ‘to a living hope’ – hope = looking forward in confident expectation

- In boot camp I was confident that boot camp wasn't going to kill me and I would see my family again and that I would go on to what was next in my life
- Our hope is only alive to the degree that we can be confident in what we are hoping for **Hebrews 6:19-20**

This *hope* we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which enters the Presence *behind* the veil, where the forerunner has entered for us, even Jesus, having become High Priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek.

- Our hope is that God is going to be with us all the way to heaven
 - Verse 3 concludes with the key to this hope we have – ‘through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead’
 - Because Jesus was raised from the dead, I have the hope that I will be raised from the dead also – not to live in this world, but to live forever in heaven
 - The resurrection of Christ is absolutely critical to this thing we call Christianity
 - In fact, without the resurrection there can be no Christianity
 - **1 Peter 1:4**
 - Everyone who claims Jesus as their Savior is entitled to an inheritance – not in this life – it is reserved in heaven
 - What is this inheritance **Romans 8:16-17**
- The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God, and if children, then heirs—heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ...**
- Jesus is God's only begotten Son
 - When we believe in Christ and receive as our Savior, we are adopted into the family of God – we are His children
 - And as children we will share in everything God the Father will give to His Son Jesus
 - The Bible teaches that the Father gave all things to the Son
 - Don't know exactly what that means, but it must be infinitely amazing
 - And in verse 5 we have God's promise to get us to heaven
 - **1 Peter 1:5**
 - Says there you 'are kept by the power of God through faith for salvation'

- Peter is saying to his readers and to us today, ‘Praise God for saving you and giving you the living hope of Heaven, and for making you joint-heirs with His Son Jesus, and for the promise of His protection all the way to heaven.’
- That is where some stumble – they don’t feel like God is protecting them
- In fact, they might even say that they feel like Job when he accused God of attacking him without cause
- Peter deals with that right here
- **1 Peter 1:6**
- ‘In this you greatly rejoice’ – rejoice in the fact that heaven is your home and that nothing in the universe can keep God from getting you there
- ‘you have been grieved by various trials’
- Peter declares that suffering is a part of the journey home
- This is exceptionally hard for some people to accept
- In fact this is why some people will not believe in God
- They ask questions like, ‘Why would a loving God (fill in the blank)?’
- The Bible doesn’t hide the fact that suffering is a part of the journey home
- Jesus said that in this world we will have tribulations, or hard circumstances
- And the apostle Paul said **Acts 14:21-22**
And when they had preached the gospel to that city and made many disciples, they returned to Lystra, Iconium, and Antioch, strengthening the souls of the disciples, exhorting *them* to continue in the faith, and saying, “We must through many tribulations enter the kingdom of God.”
- James, the brother of Jesus told us the same thing
- They all agree – suffering is normal in the life of a Christian
- Peter is going to say later **1 Peter 4:12-13**
Beloved, do not think it strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened to you; but rejoice to the extent that you partake of Christ’s sufferings, that when His glory is revealed, you may also be glad with exceeding joy.
- But we don’t suffer just for suffering’s sake
- There is a little phrase in the middle of verse 6 – ‘if need be’

- That means that suffering comes if it is necessary, necessary for what?
- **1 Peter 1:7-9**
- Trials, tribulations, and suffering prove whether your faith is genuine or not
- When everything is going well, it is easy to fake faith
- But fake faith will not get you to heaven, and it will not get you through the trials ahead
- And so God allows suffering to prove that our faith is real
- Suffering also has the potential to grow and purify our faith
- True faith is more precious than anything that this world describes as precious
- Faith is what allows us to love Jesus even in the midst of our suffering
- Even though we have never seen Jesus, we believe and we love – that is faith **John 20:29**

Jesus said to him, “Thomas, because you have seen Me, you have believed. Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed.”

- Nothing in your life is more precious to God than your faith – it is the only thing you will carry with you to heaven
- Want you to notice something in verses 6 and 8
- Verse 6 – ‘Though now...grieved by various trials’
- Verse 8 – ‘Though now...believing, you rejoice with joy inexpressible’
- Peter connects suffering and joy – just as James did **James 1:2-4**
My brethren, count it all joy when you fall into various trials, knowing that the testing of your faith produces patience. But let patience have its perfect work, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking nothing.
- Trials, tribulations, and suffering do not cancel out joy, nor do they prevent rejoicing
- It is the purity of our faith that determines the quantity of our joy and rejoicing
- We don’t have joy in or rejoice in the suffering itself – that would be weird – verse 9 tells us we rejoice in the end of or the result of our faith – the salvation of our souls
- As Jesus told His disciples **Luke 10:18b**
...rejoice because your names are written in heaven.
- Peter concludes this text with a word about those who are watching us

- **1 Peter 1:10-12**

- For over 2,000 years before Christ was born, lived, died, rose, and ascended God had been speaking to His prophets telling them about His plan to bring salvation to the world
- They wanted to see it, but they knew it was future
- So amazing is the grace of salvation that even the angels in heaven ‘desire to look into it’

- And it is easy for me to imagine them cheering us on **Luke 15:7**

I say to you that likewise there will be more joy in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine just persons who need no repentance.

- That encourages me when life gets hard – heaven is cheering me on
- As we prepare to close this service, want leave you with the Radical Idea from this message

You are headed where your eyes are looking!

- Going back to the three groups at the beginning of the message
- First group – **Looking Back**
- The first group was looking back at their life before boot camp
- You might be here today, and you are in that group
- Your life is focused on something or someone from your past
- Many something that happened to you, or didn’t happen to you
- Maybe someone hurt you, betrayed you, or abandoned you
- Maybe it was something that you did, and it is haunting you
- And because of your past, there is little or no joy or hope in your life
- As long as you are looking back, you will not move forward – repeat **Philippians 3:13-14**

Brethren, I do not count myself to have apprehended; but one thing / do, forgetting those things which are behind and reaching forward to those things which are ahead, I press toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.

- Second Group – **Looking Around**
- Or maybe you are in the second group – you are dealing with some difficult reality in your life
- There is some kind of trial, tribulation, or suffering in your life
- Could be physical pain, illness, disease – either in yourself or someone close to you
- Could be financial, or job related

- Could be relational – marriage or family not what it should be
- As long as you are focused on the difficult circumstances you will not move forward in your faith and you will have no joy in your life
- You remember the account of Peter walking on water
- There was a great storm on the Sea of Galilee and the disciples were in trouble
- Jesus shows up walking on the stormy waves - Jesus called Peter out to walk to Him – which Peter does...until **Matthew 14:29-30**

So He said, “Come.” And when Peter had come down out of the boat, he walked on the water to go to Jesus. But when he saw that the wind was boisterous, he was afraid; and beginning to sink he cried out, saying, “Lord, save me!”

- If you focus on the storm, you will sink
- The third group – **Looking Up**
- Our hope is in heaven, where Christ our Savior lives and is preparing a place for us to live with Him and the Father forever
- My hope is in a living Savior who will save me out of, through, and from suffering
- And the suffering God does allow is necessary, so that I can be better able to glorify God, bless others, and grow my faith which is more precious to God than all the gold in this world
- Our hope is not behind us, it is not around us, it is in Christ in heaven
Hebrews 12:1-2

Therefore we also, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which so easily ensnares us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.

- If you want to, as it says in verse 8 of our text, ‘to rejoice with joy inexpressible’ you will need to learn how to **Look up**
- Andy Stanley has a saying that I like, ‘Circles are better than rows!’
- In large groups we sit in rows, and someone like me talks to you
- And that is good, but to really grow in our faith, we need to get into smaller groups who sit in circles and discuss the issues of life
- Even better is when we sit two-on-two or one-on-one
- The smaller the circle, the greater your faith will grow
- And the more your faith grows, the easier it is for you to look up and rejoice in the reality that you are headed home

- You are headed where your eyes are looking! Look Up!
- Amen–**Pray**
- If you can, stay and have some pizza with us
- Tonight we start the Sunday evening service at 6:00pm – How to Study the Bible – hope to see you there