

Resurrection Hope

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[0 : 00] My name is Matthew Capone, and I'm the pastor here at Cheyenne Mountain Presbyterian Church. And it's my joy to bring God's word to you today. A special welcome if you're new or visiting with us.

We're glad that you're here. And we're glad that you're here not because we are trying to fill seats, but because we're following Jesus together as one community. And as we follow Jesus together, we've become convinced that there's no one so good.

They don't need God's grace. And no one's so bad that they can't have it. Which is why we come back week after week to hear what God has to say to us in his word. This morning, we're taking a break from our series in the book of Judges, because believe it or not, it's Easter.

That's Resurrection Sunday, when we as a church celebrate the fact that Jesus, in fact, rose from the dead. Now, when we talk about Jesus, it's important to remember we're not talking about an abstraction or an idea or a theory.

We are, in fact, talking about a historical figure, a real man. Jesus was born in the town of Bethlehem, which is five to six miles south of Jerusalem. And he grew up in Nazareth, which is 64 to 65 miles north of Jerusalem.

[1 : 15] Jesus was one of at least seven kids. And he had both brothers and sisters. Real man, real time, real space. It's also important to remember that the resurrection is not a metaphor.

When we speak about the resurrection, we are speaking about a real historical event, an event that had numerous, many eyewitnesses. And so every Resurrection Sunday, every Easter, we come together and we talk about what that means for us, how, in fact, it gives us real hope and joy now.

We're going to turn this morning to the book of 1 Peter. And the book of 1 Peter is a letter written by the Apostle Peter. He writes it in the first century A.D. to churches in modern-day Turkey.

And these churches are feeling out of place in the world, and they're facing opposition from the world. And so they have this temptation, the temptation with all the heat coming in against them, to give up on Christianity.

And so Peter writes to encourage them. Peter writes telling them why the resurrection is a better hope than any other hope, why it is worth suffering for.

[2 : 27] And so that's where we're headed this morning. We're in 1 Peter 1. We're going to look at verses 3 through 9. Our focus will be 3 and 4, especially 4, but we'll read 5 through 9 just so we have a larger, broader context.

And as we come to this passage, I imagine that there are a few of us who are Christians, and for us, the resurrection is our life. We think of it when we wake up in the morning, and it orients the rest of our day and our weeks and our months.

I would imagine for many more of us, it is actually a constant struggle for us to remember the resurrection, for it to be something as Christians that shapes our minds and our hearts and our lives.

Some of us are not Christians. Perhaps you have doubts or questions or objections to Christianity. No matter which of those three categories you fall into, we're here together this morning, and I hope that you're here because all of us need to be reminded of the great resources, the great hope that we have from the fact that Jesus rose from the dead.

And so it's with that I invite you to turn with me in God's Word. You can turn in your worship guide. You can turn on your phone. You can turn in your Bible.

[3 : 45] No matter where you turn, remember that this is God's Word. God tells us that His Word is more precious than gold, even the finest gold, and it's sweeter than honey, even honey that comes straight from the honeycomb.

And so that's why we read now 1 Peter 1, starting at verse 3. Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. According to His great mercy, He has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance that is imperishable, undefiled, and unfading, kept in heaven for you, who by God's power are being guarded through faith for a salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time.

In this you rejoice, though now for a little while, if necessary, you've been grieved by various trials, so that the tested genuineness of your faith, more precious than gold that perishes, though it is tested by fire, may be found to result in praise and glory and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ.

Though you have not seen Him, you love Him. Though you do not now see Him, you believe in Him and rejoice with joy that is inexpressible and filled with glory, obtaining the outcome of your faith, the salvation of your souls.

I invite you to pray with me as we come to this portion of God's word. Our Father in heaven, we do praise you and thank you again.

[5 : 25] We did not choose you, but you chose us. We did not figure out that we should come here this morning because we were smart enough and skilled enough, but instead, you've called us here.

You brought us. And so we ask that you would remind us of your grace in that, and you would use your word this morning to show us Jesus once again, that you would remind us of the glory and the beauty of His resurrection, that you strengthen us with the hope that it provides, and that you would use this worship service to change us, that we would look more and more like your Son and our Savior, our Lord Jesus.

It's in His name that we ask all of these things, Amen. A man named William Farley tells the story of many years ago when he visited a vineyard in the Napa Valley of California.

And when he was at this vineyard, he had a chance to speak to the foreman who explained to him many of the dynamics of the work that they performed. He told him that the grapevines that they grew could reach an age of 80 to 100 years old.

And then, in fact, they were not most productive until they hit around 30 to 50 years old. This was a long-term process of developing these grapevines, of growing this vineyard.

[6 : 48] In fact, he told him that, in fact, the taproot of many of these grapevines could grow 30 to 40 feet deep. Some of them grew so deep that they actually reached the water table far beneath the surface of the earth.

And those vines became what is called self-irrigating. In other words, they had this resource, this reservoir of water that they had access to regardless of what was happening on the top of the earth.

Whatever was happening up top, they could sort of be unfazed by it. Is there a drought? No problem. Is there incredible intense heat?

No sweat. Because these grapevines have these resources, right, that transcend what's happening up above.

William Farley provides this image because it reminds us of what, in fact, the Christian life should be like as we live it. We should have this deep reservoir of resources, a separate source of hope and peace and joy.

[8 : 02] We should have that independent of what's happening today. We have that as it transcends whatever the events are of this day or week or month.

And as you hear that, you listen to that, you might think, wow, that sounds really great. Also, that's not really my experience as a Christian. In fact, if we are honest, we would have to admit that this is more aspiration than reality for most of us.

We live lives riddled with fear and anxiety and greed. Our hearts ride the roller coaster of success and failure and wealth and poverty and praise and criticism and status and loss and recognition.

The churches in Asia Minor and Turkey who are receiving Peter's letter also know what it's like to be rattled by the circumstances around them. And so Peter writes to them to remind them of the great reservoir that's provided by Christ's resurrection.

He writes to remind them that they have a source, in fact, of hope and peace and joy that is tied beyond this world. He raises the question for them, the same question that we have, where is it that we can get unshakable hope?

[9 : 33] Christian, how can you have a deep reservoir untouched by this world? How can you have a root that goes 30 to 40 feet deep?

Well, Peter points us to the benefits of the resurrection of Jesus Christ. And he does that here in verses 3 and 4. He tells us, verse 3, we've been born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead to an inheritance.

In other words, Jesus' resurrection means that if you are a Christian, you have a great inheritance. There is something that is in the future for you that you do not experience in the present.

And so Peter gives us the simple principle that I mentioned during our confession of faith, which is this, whatever we believe about the future dramatically affects how we live in the present.

Imagine, for example, you have two people, they're virtually identical. Both of them are living in great poverty. One of them has no hope of that poverty ever ending.

[10 : 50] The other one knows that there is a relative who has named them in their will. And this relative is decades older than them.

They know the amount that's coming to them. And so as they live in the present, they have great hope in the future. They don't give in to the hopelessness and despair that the other one might have because they know there is something different coming.

That's the encouragement that Peter is giving here. You'll see this in page nine of your worship guide. It's staggering how expectations can alter how you interpret current circumstances.

Peter is reminding the Christians in these churches of this. No matter what's happening now, you have a great future. No matter what you're suffering now, there's great hope.

No matter your loss, the best things are yet to come. What is this inheritance though?

[12 : 03] What are the good things that are to come because of Jesus' resurrection? The apostle Paul tells us in Romans chapter eight that we are fellow heirs with Jesus Christ, meaning that whatever Christ's inheritance is, whatever it is he earns and receives, those things are true of us as well.

And what is it that Christ accomplishes in his death and resurrection? Well, it's the defeat of sin. It's the defeat of death. And so this inheritance, it encompasses all of those things that are coming when we see death and sin finally put under the ground.

It means the new heavens and the new earth. It's part of our future inheritance. It means the death finally and fully of sin in our own lives.

We will no longer experience tension with others because of our words and our actions and our selfishness. No, instead, we're gonna experience harmony and harmony and unity with those around us better than we can even imagine right now.

It means that we will be at peace with God and with ourselves. We'll be free finally from anxiety, from depression, from guilt, from anger.

[13 : 23] The inheritance though is not just freedom from sin in our own lives. It's freedom from sin in society and communities and nations. There will be no more systemic injustice, cruel and abusive leaders.

There will be no more contentious elections. There will be no hunger, no more poverty, no more strife. Our inheritance though is not just freedom from sin in our own lives, freedom from sin in our society.

It's also this restored creation. In Romans chapter eight, Paul also talks about the fact that this world, the natural order, is groaning with this longing for redemption.

There is some sense in which the mountains and the trees cannot wait for Jesus to come back because there will be no more sickness, no more disease.

Your bodies will work perfectly. The earth will be free of pollution. You will no longer take Zyrtec because allergies will come to an end.

[14 : 40] Because of Jesus' resurrection, there are better things to come than we can even imagine. Because of Jesus' resurrection, there are things in this world that no matter how rich and powerful and successful you are, you cannot even come close to experiencing.

You have an inheritance, imperishable, undefiled, unfading, kept in heaven for you. Peter gives us a lot of words here to try to understand what this inheritance is like.

Now I have to confess to you this morning two things. One, I buy a lot of chocolate milk. And not only that, I am the obnoxious person in the grocery store who digs around with the cartons to find the expiration date that is farthest off in the future.

I mean, I'm just one man, right? I can only drink so much chocolate milk. And so if I see that the expiration date is two days from now, am I going to buy the big jug?

No, of course not, right? That would be foolish. I'm going to drive it, buy the small jug. Small jug. Why? Because the milk is perishable.

[16 : 15] Right? It is not going to last forever. If I don't get while the getting's good, I'm either not going to get any or my body is going to rebel in a tremendous way.

Peter says, look, this is not what your inheritance is like. There is no expiration date. It is imperishable. No matter how long you wait for it, it will not go bad.

No matter how long you suffer in this world, it will still be waiting for you. There is nothing that can cause it to spoil.

It's imperishable. There's no best by date. There is no sell-by date on the inheritance that is yours because of Jesus' resurrection.

Peter also tells us it's undefiled, which is his way of saying this inheritance is not going to be affected or touched by sin.

[17 : 28] The very best experiences that you have in this world, the closest and most intimate relationships in your life, even when you see creation at its best, sin is still there in the background.

You are still not seeing it for as good as it can be. Not so, Christian, with your inheritance. You will experience finally the world without sin.

And so he tells us it's imperishable, it's untainted or undefiled. We're also told that it is unfading. You may have noticed last Sunday, if you're a careful observer, that my car was not in the parking lot of this church because my car was in the body shop.

I got rear-ended last year and I finally made it into the schedule many months later so I could get a new bumper. I went to Red Nolan Collision Center here in town, which I cannot recommend highly enough.

And they broke some very bad news to me when I took my car in. They said, this is the last time we will ever help you because we don't see cars older than 10 years old.

[18 : 54] So you've aged out. Like, we're going to let you slide in here, we'll give you a new bumper, don't come back. Why? Because my car is fading.

Right? There's a sense in which there's a relative fading, it's fading in comparison to new cars. So for a glorious few days, I got to drive around this rental car, it was a Corolla Cross, and I thought, wow, there's a lot of wonderful things that have been put in cars in the last 10 years.

This is what it's like to drive a new car. So it's fading in this relative sense, right? My car is less and less relevant. It does not have car play in it.

It does not have all the bells and whistles. It doesn't beep at me, you know, if I'm about to hit someone. There's also an absolute fading. My car is not as glorious as it was 10 years ago.

My headlights, they're kind of foggy. They don't light up the roads like they did back in 2013, 2014. They're chips, right, from the rocks of Colorado.

[20 : 08] I have a cracked windshield. Time has its effect on all things. time wears down all things where they become less and less beautiful.

Not so with your inheritance. It is imperishable, undefiled, unfading. No matter how long you wait, no matter what happens in this world, it will be as glorious then as it is now.

That brings us back to our question, which is this, where do we get that unshakable hope? What does it look like for our roots to go 30 and 40 feet into the ground that we can access a water table separate from whatever is happening today?

Well, it's reminding ourselves of this truth. No matter what happens now in this world, it cannot affect your future with Christ.

No matter what is shaken temporarily, your inheritance is secure. Your hope cannot be taken away.

[21 : 37] Let's say that you get in your car and you drive away after the service today and you're filled with hope from our celebration of Easter and you get in a horrific car accident and it turns out that you're actually paralyzed from the neck down.

Your life will change dramatically and the promise of a new body in the new heavens and the new earth is untouched.

Your future, your ultimate future changes in no way. You still have an inheritance that is imperishable, undefiled, unfading, kept in heaven for you.

Let's say that you are falsely accused of a crime you didn't commit and you end up spending the next 20 years in prison. That is a real tragedy.

And you will still experience, if you are in Christ, better things than anyone on this earth has ever seen.

[23 : 00] your future, your ultimate future remains the same. Your inheritance is imperishable, undefiled, and unfading, kept in heaven for you.

Let's say the stock market crashes tomorrow and you thought that you were going to be able to retire and now that becomes more of a dream than a reality.

Your financial security may decrease, your ultimate future is unchanged.

That is the water table of the Christian. That is the source of hope and peace and joy no matter what.

You'll see this on page nine of your worship guide. What many people would spend millions to attain, God has made available to every believer through the gift of the Holy Spirit.

[24 : 17] Christian, you have a hope. You have a future future that others spend their lives trying to secure and never achieve.

You are richer than you can imagine. Financial advisors will tell you not to watch your portfolio too closely if you want to stay sane because the ups and the downs of the market are so constant.

It's easy for our hearts to become tethered to those things and lose perspective on the big picture. Peter is telling us the opposite here.

Keep your eyes on this portfolio. Watch this portfolio every day. Remind yourself constantly of what cannot be touched.

And as life swirls around you, you will have a peace and a security and a stability that others can only dream of.

[25 : 35] For those who are in Christ, nothing and no one can touch your inheritance. No tragedy, no accident, no loss.

Paul also tells us in Romans chapter 8 this, For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worth comparing with the glory that is to be revealed to us.

What is the hardest and most discouraging thing in your life? it is not worth being compared to the glory that is going to be revealed.

If you are in Christ, the best things are yet to come. And so this raises the piercing question for all of us.

What is the glory of your life? What is the hope that you have above every other hope?

[26 : 51] What is the security that you rest your feet on? Anything else, anything besides the resurrection of Jesus Christ, which earns you an inheritance that is imperishable, unfading, and undefiled will disappoint.

Anything else will fail. Health, wealth, relationships, all good things, not ultimate things.

There is one thing that is most worthwhile, one thing that is most valuable, one thing that you cannot lose, and that is your water table.

That is what the roots of the Christian draw water from deep underneath the surface. It's not a pie-in-the-sky hope.

It's not a maybe hope. Peter tells us in verse 3 it's a living hope. It's not based on someone's projection about what might happen in the future.

[28 : 17] No, it's based on the fact that Jesus, as a real man in real time and real space, actually died and actually rose again from the dead. Paul tells us in 1 Corinthians chapter 15 this is not just some idea that someone created.

No, there were eyewitnesses who saw Jesus after his resurrection. In fact, at one point, there were 500 people who saw him at one time. We're not getting into this this morning, but there are many and great reasons that Christians believe that Jesus did in fact rise from the dead.

And so there is great security in knowing what will happen in the future. God tells us, John chapter 5, there will be a resurrection, a resurrection to life and a resurrection to judgment.

Those who are in Christ will experience a resurrection to life. Christian, that is your unshakable hope.

love. That is what gives you joy and peace and hope and confidence no matter what.

[29 : 27] Because Jesus has risen from the dead. Let's pray. Our Father in heaven, we do thank you that you have made us a great promise that we do have an inheritance that's better even than we can imagine.

And that no matter what happens here, it cannot be taken away. We ask that you would grow that hope in our hearts that it would become more and more real to our minds and our affections and that it would give us a steady and unshakable a daily peace and joy in you.

That as the world swirls around us, we would have calm as we stand on that foundation, the only foundation that cannot be shaken. We ask these things in the mighty name of Jesus Christ.

Amen.