

“Three Questions Jesus Wants Us to Answer”

1 Peter 1:3-9

INTRO:

The Apostle Peter wrote this epistle to suffering Christians. In verse 1, he describes them as scattered abroad (the diaspora). Although in one sense they had no roots. They were where they lived because of God’s plan and in God’s loving choice. God actively worked in their lives and was still at work in them. To these believers, Peter wrote and encouraged them with special truth.

As we visit this letter we will try to ask and answer three applicational questions. **(1)** Does the assurance of a home in eternity apply to you and me? **(2)** Have you and I considered the benefits of a relationship with Jesus Christ as portrayed here? **(3)** Do you and I love Him even though we have not seen Him?

- I. Are We Sure We have a Home in Heaven?
- II. Do We Know the Benefits of a Relationship with Jesus Christ?
- III. Do We Love the Lord Jesus Christ?

I. Are We Sure We have a Home in Heaven? (vs. 3-5)

A. Peter writes to these Christians in 1 Peter 1:3-5;

“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, to an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled and that does not fade away, reserved in heaven for you, who are kept by the power of God through faith for salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.”

Peter says three things of great importance to us here.

1. God has saved us and because of that salvation we possess a living certainty. We know that someday we will be with Him because God the father resurrected Him from the dead.
2. This eternal certainty is our inheritance because the Lord Jesus has saved us and is permanent and will not deteriorate. It is eternally reserved for us in heaven.
3. Finally, he says we who know the Lord Jesus are reserved for it. God keeps us through the power of God ready to be revealed in the last day.

B. These are wonderful truths. The promise of an eternal home encouraged these scattered believers who in a sense had no earthly home. The question that this asks each one of us is: where is our real home?

1. Is it our temporary home here below or is this world not our home we are just passing through?

2. If we have this understanding, we will live with eternity in view. We also will understand that home with the Lord will always be home for us.

II. Do We Know the Benefits of a Relationship with Jesus Christ?

A. There are benefits beside our future eternal home that we enjoy because we belong to the Lord Jesus Christ. He tells there hurting and homeless Christians about these benefits in the next two verses. (vs. 6-7)

"In this you greatly rejoice, though now for a little while, if need be, you have been grieved by various trials, that the genuineness of your faith, being much more precious than gold that perishes, though it is tested by fire, may be found to praise, honor, and glory at the revelation of Jesus Christ,"

B. For these believers in the midst of trials, Peter underlines the Lord's help for us in the midst of suffering. First, he reminds us that trials are not forever.

1. One benefit of knowing the Lord as our Savior is that we can rejoice in the eternal realities and look at our trials with an eternal perspective. Remember how the Apostle Paul looked at his suffering? (2 Corinthians 4:17)

"For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, is working for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory"

2. Although from our viewpoint Paul's suffering was neither light nor momentary, when he viewed it in contrast to eternity, it was nothing. It was not even to be compared to the glory that shall be revealed in us at the return of Christ.

C. Second, for the believer the little phrase, "*if need be*," is priceless. We never suffer frivolously. God always has a purpose when His people suffer. Contrary to what you may have heard or think, God is not a cosmic kill joy. He accomplishes things in our suffering that cannot be accomplished in any other way.

D. Third, he wrote that suffering properly handled by the believer has eternal benefit, vs. 7
"that the genuineness of your faith, being much more precious than gold that perishes, though it is tested by fire, may be found to praise, honor, and glory at the revelation of Jesus Christ,"

1. Their genuine faith that is shown through the test is valuable to God. It is more valuable than gold.

2. This faith, proven in the furnace of suffering, will produce praise, honor, and glory at the coming of Christ. We want to know to whom the praise, honor, and glory belongs. Grammatically, it can refer to either the Lord Jesus Christ or us or both of us. I think that

both are probably in view. To tell you the truth, I like the idea of bringing glory to Christ in the suffering that I have to do for Him.

D. The question that Peter is asking us in view of all of this is, "*Is there an eternal dimension to our suffering?*" Life here is not easy. When trouble intrudes, when we walk through the valley of the shadow of death are we sure that Jesus is there with us in the midst of the trial? Are we convinced that God has a purpose in this suffering and that our pain will make an eternal difference? If we know the Lord as Savior, this can be our guarantee.

III. Do We Love the Lord Jesus Christ?

A. To review, the first question that the Lord Jesus is asking us through the Apostle Peter is, "*Do we know that our future is sure and secure?*" If we trust Him alone to save us, we know that this is certain. Do we understand how a relationship with Christ helps us through the sufferings that we face? Are we sure that suffering is just for a time and always with a purpose? Do we understand that suffering properly handled will make an eternal difference? Finally, do we love the Lord Jesus now?

B. Our text says, (v. 8-9)

"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."

The evidence of our being the Lord Jesus Christ is that we love Him.

1. One thing that Peter can say with confidence is that those who really believe on the Lord Jesus Christ for salvation love Him. The Spirit of God working in our lives teaches us to love the Lord Jesus in spite of the fact that we have never seen Him.

2. Remember the scene in the upper room when Thomas finally met Jesus? Jesus said to him in **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'".

Happy and benefited are those who have not seen but believe. We are to find real joy in knowing Jesus, loving Jesus, and walking in obedience to Jesus.

3. Peter himself says in this verse that the joy that we should experience in all of this should exceed the ability of language to express it. It is indescribable it is ineffable. Our tremendous joy should radiate from us and give glory to our Lord.

C. Finally, he tells us that we shall receive all that we have waited for, the full and complete salvation of our souls. (**1 John 3:2**)

"Beloved, now we are children of God; and it has not yet been revealed what we shall be, but we know that when He shall appear, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is."

So, here are our questions:

1. Are we sure we have a home in heaven? We can be sure that we have a reservation in heaven and we can be reserved for that place by God.
2. Second, do we understand how a relationship with Christ helps us through the sufferings that we face? If we are saved, we know our sufferings are only for a time and are necessary. They also perform an eternal function.
3. Do you love the Lord Jesus and know the joy of walking with Him? This is real joy we are talking about here. We should be experiencing it and it should radiate from our lives. The ultimate question that Peter asks in this is, do we really know the Lord Jesus as our Savior and Lord?