

Excerpts from Life-study of 1 Peter, Message 10

PETER'S WELL SPEAKING CONCERNING THE TRIUNE GOD

Bible Verses

- 1 Pet. 1:7** So that the proving of your faith, much more precious than of gold which perishes though it is proved by fire, may be found unto praise and glory and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ;
- 8** Whom having not seen, you love; into whom though not seeing Him at present, yet believing, you exult with joy that is unspeakable and full of glory
- 9** Receiving the end of your faith, the salvation of your souls.

First Peter 1:3-12 is one long sentence. This long sentence is a blessing, a well-speaking, that involves the Trinity of the Godhead. Verse 3 says, "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ." Here Peter speaks of God the Father. Beginning in verse 3, Peter mentions the Lord Jesus Christ, or Jesus Christ, again and again. At the very end of this section, in

verse 12 , Peter speaks of the Holy Spirit. Therefore, this blessing is actually composed of the Trinity of the Godhead—the Father, the Son, and the Spirit.

In 1:3 Peter uses the word “blessed.” Paul also uses this word in Ephesians 1:3 : “Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenlies in Christ.” In Greek the word blessed means well spoken of, praised with adoration. Hence, a blessing is a well-speaking, and to bless someone is to speak well of him. Therefore, to bless God is to speak well concerning Him and all that He is to us, has done for us, and will do for us. To bless God is to speak in a sweet way of what God is, of what He has done, and of what He will do. This kind of speaking is a blessing.

Many Christians think that to bless God is to praise Him. This understanding of blessing certainly is not wrong. Whenever you are about to praise God, you need to speak something about Him. However, in what way shall we praise God? A child may say, “God, I praise You for giving me a good father, one who loves me and who earns a lot of money. God, I also praise You that my mother buys nice things for

me.” Many Christians praise God mainly for material things. They may say, “Oh, blessed be God the Father! Praise Him for giving me a good business, a large house, and a nice family.” This falls far short of the revelation in 1:3-12 .

Gradually the Lord has brought me into the thought of the divine revelation in the Bible. I can testify that when I read such a verse as 1:3, I realize that to bless God the Father is to speak well of what God is to us subjectively. It is not merely to praise Him for what He has done for us or given to us objectively. To bless God the Father is to speak subjectively of what He is to us, of what He has done for us, and of what He will do for us. This is to bless God according to what is revealed in the New Testament.

The writing of these verses is not according to religious or philosophical knowledge. These verses were written according to Peter’s spiritual experiences. For this reason, Peter’s composition is not common, not ordinary. This should strengthen our belief in God. If there were no God, how could such words be written? These words testify not only that there is a God, but also that there must be One,

the Son of God, whose name is Jesus Christ. Furthermore, there must be One who is called the Holy Spirit. This Triune God has surely worked in Peter, the writer of these verses. Therefore, Peter had experience of the Triune God.

At the time this Epistle was written, both Peter and the recipients of this book, the chosen saints scattered in Asia Minor, were under the Roman government. In A.D.64, the approximate time of the writing of 1 Peter, the Roman Empire was very strong. As a strong government, the Roman Empire also had very strong laws. It is common knowledge that Western culture is built on three pillars: Roman law, Hebrew religion, and Greek culture. The recipients of the Epistle of 1 Peter not only were under the Roman government, but they were also under the influence of Hebrew religion and Greek culture, in particular, Greek philosophy. The well speaking concerning the Triune God in 1:3-12 is altogether different from both Hebrew religion and Greek philosophy. In these ten verses there is nothing of religion or philosophy.

The source and the ground of Peter's writing are not religion or philosophy. The source and ground of

Peter's writing are the experiences of the Triune God operating in him. Peter gathered together much of his experience and put the various points of his experience into writing. Peter did not care for literary style; he cared only for the genuine points of his experience of the Triune God.

Although I am short of utterance in speaking about this, I hope that this brief word will help you understand that 1:3-12 is indeed the divine revelation. This revelation is different from anything religious or philosophical. It is altogether divine. But although it is divine, it is something experienced by a human being through the Trinity of the Godhead. Therefore, Peter's well speaking of our Triune God—the Father, the Son, and the Spirit—came from his own experience.

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Note: This version is not intended to be printed as material for pursuit during the small group gathering. Instead, it is to be used as additional reference for brothers and sisters who want to prepare in advance for fellowship on the message. We include here notes from the commentaries of the brothers in the life-study radio program. The points from these commentaries can help enrich our understanding and, eventually, our fellowship with the saints on the selected portions of the life-study message. We still recommend that, if possible, the saints still listen to the [audio message](#) in addition to reading the [life-study message](#) for personal pursuit and for preparation for small group gatherings. We also wish to point out that these notes have not been fully polished.

Introduction

[CW]: The Apostle Peter opens his first epistle with a long and truly marvelous blessing of the Triune God. This blessing occupies 10 of the first 12 verses, and these verses are full of wonderful spiritual expressions based not on mere praise to God for His mighty works of creation and even salvation, but are full of Peter's well-speaking of all three persons of the Godhead concerning what God has done and will do subjectively in all of His chosen ones. Ed Marks has joined us. Ed, I think this program serves somewhat as a capstone, I would say, for time spent in these first 12 verses in Chapter 1. Really a marvelous portion, isn't it?

[EM]: It is, Chris. And Chris, just as you pointed out, the focus of our fellowship today will be on our subjective experience of the Triune God. Whenever the Bible talks about the divine Trinity, the Triune God, it's always in the realm of our subjective experience of Him so that He can dispense Himself into our entire being and we can become His corporate expression. So, we really want to see what Peter has to say about how we can experience the God whom we love. And, Chris, again, as you pointed out, Peter begins with this word, "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ," and this Greek word for "blessed", when you bless God like this, it really means well-speaking. It means you're speaking well of God. So, this is what Peter is doing in a very marvelous, rich, deep, and profound way when you read these verses, as we've covered in previous programs, it is just amazing that a fisherman could write this. You really realize that it really was the Lord in him and through him recording these things so that we could really enjoy and experience Him so that He would be our constitution and He would be our expression. So, I think this will be a great help to our listeners today.

[CW:] This whole concept of blessing God, speaking well of God, would typically say, "Well, this is just to worship God." And there's much praise that's given to God for being, you know, the Almighty, the Creator, and all of these marvelous attributes of God that represent objectively what God is in the universe. But really in these verses, we get to something that's got a much more intimate flavor to it, doesn't it, and a much more sort of intrinsic and internal component. I think we'll see that brought out today, won't we?

[EM]: Yes, Chris, you're absolutely right. To bless God is actually to speak what he is with all His attributes, His virtues, all the processes He went through. But again, we'll try to focus on how we can actually experience what the Lord says through Peter in these verses.

[CW]: That's really good. As we've looked at these verses now for more than a week, we've seen, I think, most of the points brought out. Today's burden is not so much to add more points, so to speak,

to our understanding, but I think kind of an appreciation and an apprehension of this matter, of our subjective experience. And I would also add maybe as an introductory word here that in verse 1 and 2, he tells us who his intended audience is. We'll hear a little bit of that in Witness Lee's sharing. And the letter was written to the sojourners of the dispersion of these regions, Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia, all regions or provinces of the Roman Empire at that time, a strong, dominant world government with all of these areas under similar influence, both of government, culture, and religion. And we'll see that brought out as well. So why don't we join Witness Lee, Ed?

[EM]: Very good.

Part 1

[CW]: Ed, we've had to cut down the length of the portions of Witness Lee. Obviously, we have some audio quality that's a little bit difficult for us to deal with. But we really felt it was important to at least get an encapsulation of his burden in this message. This marvelous point, the region and the people that Peter is writing to, all under these strong influences. Yet, in his word, there's no addressing any of these things. He's really cutting through the political, the cultural, and the religious environment of the time, isn't he?

[EM]: He is. And as I was considering this, I feel that it's very meaningful that here Peter is writing to this particular audience. Of course, at that time, the three supporting structures of human civilization, if you consider even today, these are the pillars of our Western civilization. And it's very significant that when the Lord died, if you look at John 19, verse 20, you remember when He died, Pilate put a sign above the cross. Jesus, the Nazarene, the King of the Jews. And that was in Hebrew, Latin, and Greek which represents Hebrew religion, Greek culture, and Roman government or politics, showing that when Christ died, He was crucified by all mankind and for all mankind. But then He entered into resurrection and He came into us as the life-giving Spirit, according to 1 Corinthians 15:45. So, now this person is in us and He's totally in another realm, in the divine and mystical realm for us to experience. And Chris, what I would like to do as we're fellowshiping about this is verses three and four to me are very wonderful because in verse three, Peter first talks about the matter of regeneration. He blesses God, who's the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, and he says, "... according to His great mercy, He regenerated us." We need to realize right there, it is a great thing, Chris, to realize what regeneration is. And of course, John 3:6 talks about this. It says, the Lord says, "that which is born of the flesh is flesh." That was our first birth. And then he says, "that which is born of the Spirit", that's the capital S spirit, "is spirit", lower S spirit, that our human spirit. So John 3:6 shows us, and John 3 in particular, shows us that we have had two births as Christian. The first birth was when we were born physically, but we needed another birth. We needed a spiritual birth, a divine birth, so that we could become the sons of God. And Chris, what is amazing in this verse, verse three, is that Peter tells us that we were regenerated through Christ's resurrection. So if someone asked you, when were you regenerated? In our sight, we might think, well, I was regenerated at a certain point, a certain year, a certain day. But in God's sight, all of us believers were regenerated when he rose from the dead. Now, a good picture of this is in John 12 verse 24, when the Lord likens His death to a grain of wheat falling into the ground and dying. Now, when a grain of wheat falls into the ground and dies, of course, the

shell is broken. The shell dies, that was the shell of His humanity. But when that happens, the life within the grain is released. And so when He died, He released his life from within His being, the divine life. And then in His resurrection, just as when a grain of wheat, when it resurrects and becomes a shock of wheat to produce many grains, when Christ resurrected, His resurrection was a life-dispensing resurrection. And He dispensed His life into us, and now that one grain, which was Christ, has become many grains, which is us as the many sons of God. Now, in time, of course, that's the fact that Peter is talking about. But on the day that we called on the Lord's name and said, "Lord Jesus, I'm a sinner, forgive me of my sins. I'd like to receive You right now as my Savior and as my life." He came into us as the life-giving Spirit, and He regenerated our spirit. That means our spirit now contains God in Christ as the Spirit, as the eternal life. Romans 8:10 says our spirit is life. So, what regeneration is, it is to receive another life in addition to our human life. So that's a great thing. Chris, verse 3 is a great, great truth that is related to our subjective experience. You know, maybe you have something to share about that, and we can say a little bit about verse 4 also.

[CW]: Well, I was just going to say, why don't we go ahead and take the time right now and maybe touch verse 4. We're regenerated unto an inheritance, incorruptible and undefiled and unfading, kept in the heavens. And, of course, we've enjoyed these last few programs. The nature of this inheritance is heavenly, but its availability is immediate, isn't it?

[EM]: It is, Chris. And these two verses are very powerful because, first, you have regeneration. Okay, now we're believers. The Lord Jesus lives in us, but that's not the end of the Christian life. Many believers, sadly, you're regenerated, you're saved, and then it's good enough. But with Peter, when he begins verse 5, he is telling us that we need to experience Christ now, who is the embodiment of the Triune God. And he uses this word, inheritance. Now, in Ephesians 1:14, Paul says that when we received Christ, He became the pledge of our inheritance. So in our spirit, we actually have inherited the Triune God. But we will receive the full inheritance when we meet Him in the next age, when we're glorified. But today, we have the pledge in us. We have a foretaste within our being. Of course, that is absolutely marvelous, which shows that we need to enjoy Him as the pledge of our inheritance every day. Chris, in Acts 26:18, Paul said that he was commissioned to open people's eyes, that they might turn from darkness to light. Of course, that is a marvelous verse. At the end, he says that they might receive an inheritance. Well, what is our inheritance that we need to enjoy every day? In Colossians 1:12, Paul says this, he says, "We give thanks to the Father because He has qualified us for a share of the portion of the saints in the light." Now, what this means, Chris, is this. This first Colossians 1:12 is actually going back to the children of Israel, whose inheritance was the good land. And they each got a portion of the good land. Well, the good land in the Old Testament is a marvelous type of the all-inclusive Christ. He is our good land. The good land was full of wheat, full of barley, figs, minerals, all kinds of riches, so that the children of Israel could use those riches to build up the temple for God's expression. Now, we believers, when we receive Christ, He became our portion of the good land for us to enjoy. So, we need to enjoy Him every day as our land, as our soil. Now, this verse, Colossians 1:12, says that we enjoy Him as our portion in the light. So, if we are going to enjoy the Lord as our inheritance, which is what this talks about, every day we need to live in the light. And, of course, light is the very presence of God. But practically, Chris, there's three ways that we can enjoy this inheritance

by being in the light. One is by being in the Word. Psalm 119 says, "Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path." So, when we come to the Word and we come in a spirit and atmosphere prayer to contact the Lord every day in the Word, we are in the light and we can enjoy Him as the portion of our inheritance. Also, another practical way we can stay in the light to enjoy the portion of our inheritance every day is we have one another. Matthew 5 says, "You are the light of the world." So, when you get with some other believers and you fellowship with them, just like we're doing here, because we have the light in us, the Lord tells us we are the light of the world. So, if we get into fellowship with other believers in a pure way, seeking the Lord Himself, then we are in the light, and in that light we enjoy the portion of our inheritance. Also, Chris, you know the church in Revelation 1 is a lampstand. And, again, this refers to the meetings of the believers. And when we're in a proper Christian meeting on the ground of oneness, we enjoy the light and we can enjoy Him as our inheritance.

[CW]: Wow. Ed, we've talked about Peter here, as you mentioned a while ago, this fisherman, not really learned. We don't have any record of his having a top education, most likely was not. And many have been somewhat critical even of his style of writing, in that it was not up to the high classical Greek standards and grammar and what not, but the expressions are so rich and there's so much content in his writing. Such a composition could be produced out of this kind of vessel, has to be by his continual enjoyment and experience of this triune God, doesn't it?

[EM]: It does, Chris. And you can see just by these two verses, you have regeneration, which is the base of our Christian life, and then enjoying the Lord as our inheritance, so that we can enter into Him and enjoy Him as our full inheritance in the next age.

[CW]: We want to come back to this point of Peter's experience in this second section. Let's join witness Lee, and then we'll come back for a couple more minutes.

Part 2

[CW]: It was pointed out in a program within the last few days, if you take a snapshot of Peter and the Gospels, and then compare that with what we're reading here in these verses, if nothing else, that is irrefutable evidence of the reality of God, isn't it?

[EM]: It is, Chris. I mean, you can see what kind of transformation took place in Peter's life, in his inward being, to utter these things. And Chris, I was just sharing with you beforehand, I remember when Brother Lee worked on the notes for this in our recovery version, in the life-study, he said this was one of the hardest labors he had. Of course, he always labored in prayer and fellowship with the Lord, but he just realized when he got into this how deep these epistles really are. And Chris, I would like to mention some other things related to our experience. In the last segment, we talked about regeneration. We talked about enjoying the Lord as our inheritance by being in the light, and to be in the light of His presence is to be in the word, fellowship with the saints, be in a proper Christian meeting. Chris, in the midst of all of these deep things, I love what Peter says in verse 8. He said, "Whom having not seen, you love." He comes back to loving the Lord. And he says, "Into whom though not seeing Him at present, yet believing, you exult with joy that is unspeakable and full of glory." So, Chris, when he shared this, I mean, again, these utterances are just divine.

[CW]: Ofcourse, the Lord said to Peter three times, "Peter, do you love Me?" It comes back to it, doesn't he?

[EM]: It does, Chris. I was just considering the same thing. Here he had denied the Lord three times, and then the Lord appeared to him and the other disciples in resurrection. He wanted to restore Peter's love for him, and he asked Him three times, "Do you love me?" Peter said, "Lord, you know that I love you," and the Lord's response was to "Feed My lambs, shepherd My sheep, feed My sheep". So Peter could never forget that because the Lord was restoring his love for Him and giving him a charge, "If you really love Me, then you will dispense me into My people." Chris, this is a great thing in our Christian life that we never graduate from, is that we need to love the Lord every day. And we have been helped by this ministry even to say, "Lord Jesus, I love You." One time Brother Lee said if we say, "Lord Jesus, I love You" 100 times during the day, we'll run to the meeting in the evening. Because when you tell the Lord that you love Him and you give yourself to love Him, then He becomes your unspeakable joy. This is the way to enjoy Him according to this verse. And then lastly, Chris, just as a way of a conclusion, Peter says that when we love Him, when he becomes our unspeakable joy, then we will have the salvation of our souls. And that relates to transformation. You see, we talked about regeneration in our spirit. Then we talked about enjoying Him as our inheritance by being in the Word, fellowshiping with the saints, being in a proper Christian meeting, and loving him supremely. If we do that, then He will spread out from our spirit into all the parts of our soul. To transform our soul, regeneration takes place in our spirit, glorification takes place in our body, but transformation takes place in our soul. So we need to enjoy Him every day so that His mind becomes our mind, His will becomes our will, His emotions become our emotions. Then we will be transformed. Our soul will be saved in the next age. He will be our reward, and eventually we'll be glorified in our body. So this is the goal. We want to be not just saved in our spirit, but saved in our soul through transformation. And this all comes from enjoying Him as our inheritance through loving Him exclusively and giving ourselves to love Him every day.

[CW]: Ed, you never fail when we come together in these recording sessions to really bring us back to the touchstone. We talked about this program as a capstone, that's sort of the crowning piece, but the touchstone, foundational, is to experience the wonderful Lord Jesus in such an intimate way, a genuine way, every day. And we can see from the illustration right before us what will be produced according to God's faithfulness. It's always wonderful to have you. I hope you can come more often as we continue on in Peter, 1 and 2 Peter.

[EM]: Yeah, Chris, this is a very, very precious life-study, and I would just like to encourage our listeners to get the printed message also because this is so deep and rich, and if you have what's there in print, you can reconsider it and really get into it in a much deeper way.

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